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The Young American Voter in the New Millennium

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The Young American Voter in the New Millennium

by

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Dedication

To Jason and Adler.

You are my everything.

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The Young American Voter in the New Millennium

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A puzzling age gap in vote choice appeared between young and older Americans between the 2004 and the 2012 presidential elections in the United States. This dissertation seeks to explain the emergence and persistence of this gap, and more generally to understand when the usual processes of political socialization might be disrupted. I posit that in today's polarized political environment, young people are more susceptible to the short-term forces affecting campaigns and elections—namely national context, performance issues, and candidates—due to their malleable partisan preferences. Older Americans, with more crystallized partisan attachments and better-defined political predispositions, are not as easily swayed by national conditions and the short-term forces impacting politics. While young people usually do not pay much attention to nor engage much with politics, the prevailing national conditions and turbulence of the political environment from 2004 to 2012 made politics salient to young people, leading to a performance issue-driven shift in attitudes and opinions about candidate and party competency on handling major problems facing the country. In the future, I expect we might see another age gap in vote choice when party competency is questioned on the large salient issues of an election, particularly on issues of foreign policy, and the national context strongly favors one party over the other.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

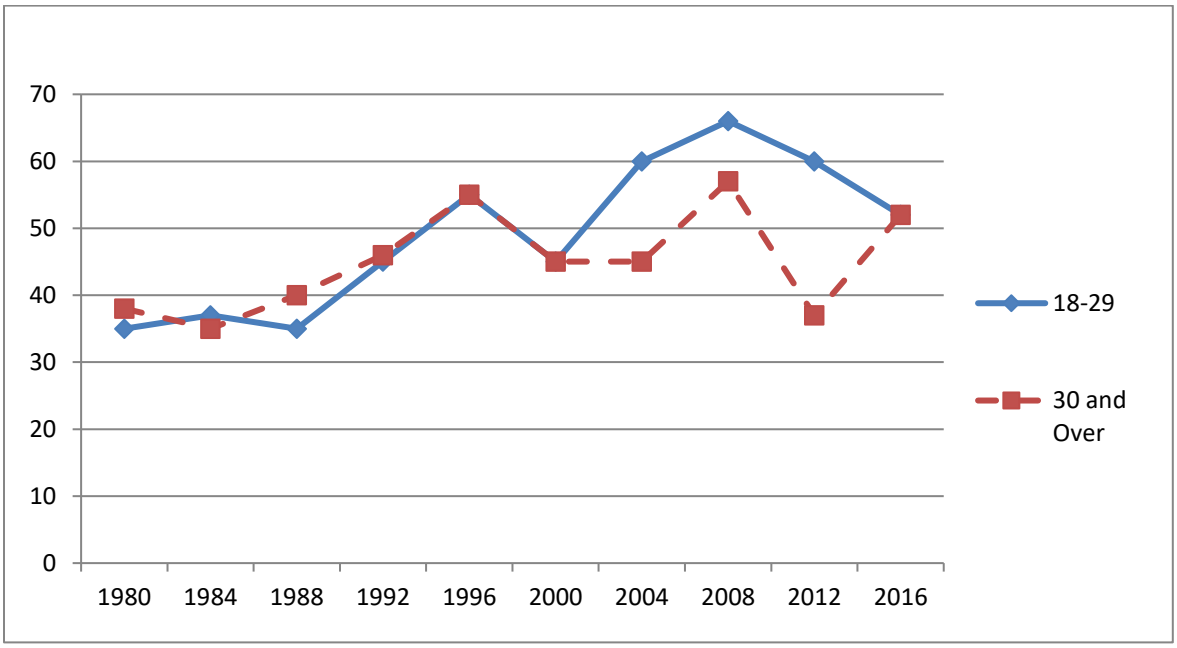
During the latter half of the twentieth century, a general consensus among political behavior scholars regarding young Americans emerged— young people were generally uninvolved and uninterested in politics (e.g. Wattenberg 2011, Zukin et al. 2006). Since the turn of the twenty-first century, though, we have seen an increase in turnout and participation among the youngest segment of the electorate. This, in and of itself, is an intriguing development. However, the more puzzling and interesting development that is largely overlooked is the party gap that has developed between the Millennial[1] generation and the rest of the U.S. electorate since 2000. The 2000 election itself seems to have been a critical turning point, as it was the last election in which the young and older electorate resembled each other in terms of vote choice. From 2004 to 2012, a much higher percentage of 18-29-year-olds preferred Democratic candidates at election time compared to Americans over the age of 30. This tendency is particularly notable at the presidential level. Indeed, despite the increased focus on youth turnout in recent elections, the most striking fact is not their level of participation (though this has gone up proportionally, they still vote at lower levels than every other age group), but their remarkably pro-Democratic behavior.

The empirical data on this fact are striking. According to the American National Election Studies (ANES), a 15-point disparity in Democratic presidential candidate preference[2] emerged in 2004 between 18-29-year-olds and voters over 30. This gap shrank

[1] The boundaries for what defines a "Millennial" vary from scholar to scholar. For the present study, any person born in 1979 or after is considered a member of the Millennial generation or cohort, as 2000 would be the first election that the oldest of these individuals would be eligible to vote. The defining characteristic of Millennials is coming of age with proficiency in the use of the Internet for information-gathering, which is virtually costless and widely available. Millennials are distinct in that they grew up in a period of true digital communities (Zukin et al. 2006, 16). A distinct end-boundary as to who is considered a Millennial has yet to be determined.

[2] These figures include both voters and nonvoters.

Figure 1.1: Democratic Presidential Candidate Preference by Age Group, Voters and Nonvoters (in percentages)



Source: ANES Time Series Cumulative Data File 1980-2016[3]

to a nine-point difference in 2008 as the rest of the electorate preferred the Democratic candidate in higher proportions as well, and then expanded back to a 12-point difference in 2012 (Figure 1.1). These figures have been corroborated by several exit polls and surveys, most notably the Pew Research Center's studies on the Millennial generation. The emergence and persistence of this gap is puzzling due to the fact that the preferences of young people had been fairly equal to those of older Americans for the previous two decades. In fact, the lack of interest and engagement of young people strongly suggests that

[3] I only extend this graph back to 1980 to be consistent because this candidate preference variable includes both voters and nonvoters, and is calculated using two post-election variables. The first variable asks voters who they voted for in the election. The second question asks non-voters which candidate they preferred, even if they did not vote. The second candidate preference variable was first asked in the 1980 ANES, so extending the analysis back further would necessitate combining the post-election vote variable with a pre-election candidate preference variable. This could be problematic since late-deciders (individuals who choose their preferred candidate within 2 weeks of an election) tend to be younger and less politically sophisticated than the rest of the electorate, and their choices look random in the American context (Gopoian and Hadjiharalambous 1994).

their attitudes and preferences should not be terribly distinct. Just as puzzling is the fact that this gap disappeared in the 2016 election. Thus, recent changes represent not only an interesting empirical development in the behavior and opinions of young people, but also a new theoretical challenge to explain.

Plenty of anecdotal evidence has been offed by the media as to why young people preferred Democrats at the ballot box from 2004 to 2012, and while marketing and journalistic stories about Millennials abound, few comprehensive systematic studies have been performed that link the seminal studies of youth opinion and behavior (e.g. Jennings and Niemi 1968; Beck 1975) to the recent behavioral phenomenon. My dissertation aims to fill this void, for both practical and political purposes. Practically speaking, the pro-Democratic behavior of the young was a boon for the Democrats during this period; in fact, it may have been decisive in the 2012 presidential election. Because of the Electoral College, the youth vote carries more weight in some states than in others, and young people appear to have tipped the scales in favor of Obama in many of the consequential battleground states in 2012. Obama won Ohio by 2.98% (50.67-47.69), Virginia by 3.87% (51.15-47.28), and Florida by a mere 0.9% (50.0-49.1) (Husted 2012; Virginia SBOE 2012; Florida DOS 2012). In Ohio, where young people made up 17% of the electorate, 62% voted for Obama while 35% voted for Romney. This provided Obama with a net advantage of about 4.6 points statewide. Similarly, the young in Florida and Virginia netted 5.4 and 4.8 points for Obama, respectively. If Millennials had split their votes 50/50, Obama's advantage would have been reduced by 2.04% (48.73 to 49.73) in Ohio, 2.53% in Virginia (47.98-50.41), and 2.56% in Florida (47.44-51.66). In other words, Obama would have lost these critical battleground states.

From a more theoretical perspective, young people were a growing and increasingly distinct political force from 2004 to 2012, which defies traditional political socialization

patterns and challenges our understanding of how motivation and engagement influence political behavior. 18-29-year-olds comprised 17 percent of the electorate in 2004, 18 percent of the electorate in 2008, and 19 percent of the electorate in 2012, while voters 65 or older comprised only 16% of the electorate in each of these elections (Fox News 2012). Exit polls also indicate that 60% of 18-29-year-olds who turned out in 2012 voted for Barack Obama while only 44% of voters over the age of 65 did so. In 2000, on the other hand, exit poll data indicate the opposite—only about 48% of 18-29-year-olds who turned out voted for the Democratic candidate, while 51% of individuals over the age of 65 did so (CNN 2004). This suggests that the cohort of voters recently entering the electorate were much more Democratic in their preferences (almost 2 to 1) than the generation of voters they are replacing, hinting at a possible change in the distribution of preferences in the electorate. If the rate of candidate preference among the young in 2000 had been the same as it was in 2004, when the popular vote differed by only about half a million people and Bush won the Electoral College by five votes, Al Gore likely would have won the election comfortably.

As several journalists and pundits have observed, if Millennials continue to vote Democratic in years to come, the Democrats will almost certainly command a sizable national majority (e.g. Judis 2007, Dionne Jr. 2010). Moreover, the behavioral tendencies of young people with the Democrats is particularly worrisome for Republican elites. While young people today are not all liberal, party identifiers and partisan leaners are generally directionally stable. Relatively few people change from one party to the other, and any shift in partisanship is usually a shift in the intensity of partisan identification, not in direction (Keith et al. 1993, 87-88). In fact, leaners have a greater tendency to vote for the candidate of the party they feel closer to, and are generally more loyal to that party than weak partisans in presidential elections. And where individuals end up on the political spectrum

largely depends on where they start; the political events of a voter's teenage and early adult years are enormously important in the formation of long-term partisan preferences (Bartels and Jackson 2014; Ghitza and Gelman 2014). Because of this, we might expect a majority of Millennials today to retain their Democratic loyalty as they age.

Despite numerous news reports about the voting preferences of young people in recent elections, with the exception of a handful of Pew Research Center reports, few systematic analyses to uncover the causes for the recent age gap in vote choice have been performed. This dissertation looks to rectify this deficit. While this dissertation primarily investigates the causes for the differences in candidate preference between 18-29-year-olds and Americans over the age of 30 from 2004 to 2012, it also provides evidence on many of the conventional wisdoms and anecdotes about the changing behavior of the young. Plenty has been written about the transference of partisanship from parents to their children, about the malleability of political attitudes at the time one comes of political age, and about the potential divergence of attitudes between the young and older age cohorts during turbulent political times (Beck 1975; Jennings and Niemi 1968, 1975, 1991; Nie et al. 1979). Very little has been done to connect these seminal studies with the age gap we saw from 2004 to 2012, and we need a better understanding of the conditions under which the "normal" pattern of partisan behavior does not hold.

Political environments differ for each cohort of young voters as they come of political age and experience politics firsthand. Young people today are probably less subject than previous generations to coherent socializing forces due to the dissipation of familial engagement with politics (Lawless and Fox 2015), the decline of social capital and community involvement (Putnam 2001), and the decay of the New Deal Party system (Bibby and Schaffner 2008). This leads to weaker party ties that make young people today even more susceptible to short-term forces in an election, and are thus more likely than

ever to blow with the prevailing wind. While the empirical analyses in this study primarily offer comparisons between young and older voters between the 2004 and 2012 elections, there are inferences we can draw that can provide greater insight into the social and psychological processes that produce patterns of generational opinion divergence.

In this dissertation, I examine some of the extant theories of voting behavior to explain the age gap in vote choice we observed between 2004 and 2012 to determine if and when another age gap in vote choice may appear. As such, I seek to uncover the causes of this 9-15% gap in presidential candidate preference favoring the Democrats among the young from 2004 to 2012. More specifically, the research questions I strive to answer are: 1) What are the underlying causes for the emergence of this shift in candidate preference among America's youth? 2) What do the causes imply regarding the over-time durability of the shift in attitudes among Millennials? And 3) Under what conditions might we see another age gap in vote choice emerge?

This age gap in vote choice presents a challenge to existing theories of voting behavior. While contemporary electoral behavior studies focus little attention on the political environment when explaining vote choice, my theory seeks to unite individual-level attitudinal factors with national contextual factors to explain the age gap that arose after the turn of the new millennium. People of different age groups are likely to perceive and react to the same political experiences in different ways because of the particular stage of personal and social development they have reached when the events occur (Delli Carpini 1986, 8). As such, I posit that young people are more susceptible to the short-term forces affecting campaigns and elections—namely national context, issues, and candidates—due to their malleable partisan preferences, especially in today's polarized political environment. This susceptibility led them to be more reactive to performance issues by the incumbent that personally affected them from 2004-2012, including the downturn in the

economy and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in which they witnessed their peers fighting and dying. Older Americans, with more crystallized partisan attachments and better-defined political predispositions, are not as easily swayed by national conditions and the short-term forces impacting politics.

In fact, one might consider older Americans to be the driving force behind the age gap we observed in recent presidential elections, as they are less reactive to contextual developments because of polarization and the ease with which informed people with stronger party ties are able to find echo chambers that reinforce their pre-existing views (Stroud 2008; Sunstein 2009). Older individuals are now more affectively polarized than ever before (e.g. Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Hetherington and Rudolph 2016), likely due to the ideological sorting that marked the end of the New Deal Party system in the 1970s (Sundquist 2011). But because young people hold weaker, more malleable partisan ties (Franklin 1984; Franklin and Jackson 1983), they tend to be more reactive to the current political environment and less rooted by their political predispositions. Thus, the prevailing national conditions and turbulence of the political environment from 2004 to 2012 made politics salient to young people, leading to a performance issue-driven shift in attitudes and opinions about candidate and party competency on handling major problems facing the country. In the future, I expect we might see another age gap in vote choice when party competency is questioned on the large salient issues of an election, particularly on issues of foreign policy, and the national context strongly favors one party over the other.

I must be upfront about the limitations of this dissertation. Because the age gap in vote choice was only realized in retrospect, the availability of good data investigating the attitudes and behavior of young people is lacking. Panel data would be ideal to examine individual-level opinion change during this period; however, a panel dataset with sufficient numbers of young people does not exist for this period. On top of that, young people are

notoriously difficult to contact in large national surveys. Because of this, I rely heavily on aggregate-level analysis using American National Election Studies (ANES) data to examine aggregate shifts in opinion and behavior rather than individual-level shifts since the ANES provides the best over-time consistency in the types of questions asked, though the number of cases for analysis (N for young people) in certain years is somewhat low.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Because this is a puzzle that is extremely difficult to untangle after the fact, I must piece together a story with many moving pieces. To capture the complexity of the effects of the turbulent national context and short-term campaign factors on youth vote choice, this dissertation is a multi-step enterprise. In Chapter 2, I first discuss the existing literature on the attitude development of young people and what we know about the Millennial generation in particular. Then I provide an overview of the vote choice literature and discuss how extant theories—including the social-psychological model, rational choice/proximity models, and issue ownership models of vote choice— open the door for a variety of possible causes for the age gap in vote choice. I use this literature to build a case for my theory and discuss the hypotheses I intend to test.

In Chapter 3 I use closed-ended measures in the ANES surveys to investigate the attitudes of young people towards the parties and their candidates in presidential elections from 1992 through 2016. Given journalistic claims that young people just "like the Democrats better" (e.g. Rundio 2008), I use first examine whether young people identified with the Democratic Party in larger proportions from 2004 to 2012 than in earlier election years, and whether they identified with the Democrats at higher rates than older adults. I next determine whether the attitudes of 18-29-year-olds towards the parties and their candidates are in fact distinct from older Americans using party and candidate thermometer

ratings. More specifically, I explore whether young people are more affectively polarized today than older Americans. I then examine candidate and incumbent thermometer scores to inform the analyses of subsequent chapters.

In Chapter 4, I use closed-ended 7- point issue scales in the ANES to examine one of the short-term factors affecting vote choice—prospective issue preferences and issue proximity to the candidates. Given the contradictory evidence as to whether the masses have polarized on substantive matters of public policy, I explore whether, in the aggregate, young people have become more liberal on policy issues and whether they can better see a difference between the candidates during the period from 2004-2012 on substantive policies than in immediately-prior election years. I then create proximity models based on the spatial theory of voting to determine whether young people perceive the Democratic candidates' positions to be closer to their own, and whether they are using these issue proximities when making their candidate choice decisions. I create similar proximity models for older Americans as well to detect possible differences in the use of prospective issue proximities between older and younger Americans. To avoid complications from projection, I create a second set of models using more objective measures of candidate placement on these issue scales by using the sample means for the candidates' positions.

Chapter 5 is the true pièce de résistance of this dissertation. I employ an original use of open-ended ANES data based on my own re-examination and coding of party and candidate "likes" and "dislikes" measures to determine the impact of candidates, national context, and issues—including retrospective assessments of party performance on those issues— on the candidate choice of young people during times of political turbulence. I use these open-ended responses to ANES likes and dislikes questions about the candidates and parties from 1972 to 2012 since the 1972 election was the first election in which 18-20-year-olds could vote after the voting age dropped with the ratification of the 26th

amendment. These open-ended responses give an investigator an unfettered look at the considerations individuals use when evaluating political objects like the parties and candidates, and are particularly appropriate for examining the way in which citizens think about an election. I create similar measures for older Americans as well to examine the effect of the same factors on their candidate choice preferences.

I first measure partisan valences on a number of party, candidate, and issue domains to determine whether perceived national conditions favored the Democrats from 2004 to 2012. I then create a series of probit models using individual-level valences on these candidate, party, and issue domains to determine whether candidate and issue factors have an effect on candidate preference for young people. I run the same models on older people during this period to determine if party factors more frequently come into play among the over-30 crowd, as my theory predicts. Finally, I test the generalizability of my theory using the 1972 and 1976 election data as this period of politics was similarly turbulent to the period from 2004 to 2012. I examine whether the salient issues of that period had an effect of greater magnitude on the candidate preference of young people relative to party factors.

This dissertation concludes in Chapter 6. It summarizes the findings of each chapter and discusses the generalizations that can be taken from the research I have performed. It also suggests the practical implications of my findings and as well as avenues for future research.

In sum, my dissertation develops a theory suggesting that the issue context changed after the 2000 election as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan made politics relevant to the lives of young people in 2004 and 2008, increasing political awareness and interest among this age group. The heightened salience of performance issues continued into the 2012 election with the economic recession and the persistent unemployment affecting the young. During this period, Republicans suffered from negative retrospective performance

evaluations on these issues, and held incongruent prospective issue positions on the moral and social issues young people care about. While older Americans held crystallized partisan predispositions that somewhat insulated them from these national conditions and short-term forces, the opinions and behaviors of young people were more heavily swayed by the winds of change. This confluence of processes and conditions altogether created a generational divergence in political opinions and behavior between Millennials and older Americans. But when these national problems were resolved, and national conditions no longer heavily favored the Democrats, we witnessed a return to the equilibrium where the general lack of interest and involvement of the young was reflected in their voting behavior—which once again mirrored that of older Americans in 2016.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical and empirical foundations that underpin this dissertation. I start with a discussion of what we know about the attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of young people. Then I review the foundational theories of vote choice that generally inform our understanding of youth voting. In describing my theory for the age gap in vote choice from 2004 to 2012, I combine elements of generational theory, social-psychological theory, rational choice and retrospective voting, and issue ownership theories of attitude development and vote choice. My approach highlights the impact of national conditions and context on the vote, which is an element not often included in most theories of vote choice.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE

When it comes to political participation, young people are generally less interested, less engaged, less involved, and less rooted in their communities than older adults[4] (Lawless and Fox 2015; Wattenberg 2011). The political apathy that characterizes young adults suggests that we should not expect their attitudes and behaviors to be terribly distinct from older Americans. In fact, we should expect them to slightly exaggerate the preferences of the older electorate as they tend to only receive the "loudest shouts" from the political world (e.g. Zaller 1992). Yet this was not the case between 2004 and 2012, when 18-29-year-olds preferred Democratic candidates at much higher rates than older Americans at the ballot box.

The members of youngest cohort of voters today have an unusual combination of views. In general, they are more socially liberal but more fiscally conservative compared

[4] Dalton (2008) is one of few scholars who argues that while young people are less interested in traditional forms of political participation, they are more likely to participate through less-traditional means such as petition-signing and consumer boycotting.

to previous generations at the same age, and are much more likely to label themselves as "liberal" (e.g. Keeter, Horowitz, and Tyson 2008; Kirby and Kawashima-Ginsburg 2009). Members of the Millennial[5] generation appear supportive of decreased government involvement in the home and schools, yet are favorable towards government regulation and governmental policies that attempt to close the gap between the rich and the poor (Zukin et al. 2006). On the topic of national security, while young people are often the most enthusiastic supporters of military engagement (Wattenberg 2011, 137), they are also some of the first to change their views on the necessity of war (Abramson, Aldrich, and Rhode 2012). In addition, higher education levels, higher proportions of minorities, and lower levels of religiosity among the young make it less likely for Millennials to hold conservative positions on the moral issues that have been the focus of the Republican Party for the last few cycles. In fact, some have speculated that this may be driving young people away from the GOP and its candidates (Campbell 2002; Zukin et al. 2006, 169).

The bulk of research on political attitudes and preferences of the young come from studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s on political socialization and the transmission of political beliefs, including party identification, from parents to their children.[6] Political views are influenced most by events that occur during the adolescent years, so in more quiescent times we should expect the distribution of party identification and political beliefs of the young and older generations to be relatively similar (e.g. Beck 1975; Dawson, Prewitt, and Dawson 1977; Jennings and Niemi 1968; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1979). This had been the case for decades prior to the turn of the 21st century, and was reflected in

[5] Millennials made up the bulk of 18-29 year old voters from 2004 to 2012.

[6] Political socialization is a developmental process through which a citizen matures politically, acquiring a complex of information, feelings, and beliefs about the political world (Dawson et al. 1977, 38)

similar rates of vote choice between young people and older Americans. So why might the attitudes of a whole cohort of young voters differ from older generations?

One dominant life-cycle theory is that age breeds conservatism, and that the liberal attitudes young people hold become more conservative as an individual experiences new politically-relevant events such as purchasing a home or having children (Dawson, Prewitt, and Dawson 1977). But if this were the case, life cycle patterns should be consistently found in different eras and therefore be a constant feature of elections (Delli Carpini 1986; Wattenberg 2011, 2). Yet we do not see this in reality, and this theory is not supported by much empirical evidence (Converse 1976). In fact, the only life-cycle effect for which strong evidence is found is that party identification tends to strengthen as a function of the length of time an individual holds a generalized preference for a particular party and has repeatedly voted for it (Converse 1976; Franklin 1984).

A more promising theory to explain cohort differences in attitudes is generational theory. This theory proposes that people of the same age share important political learning experiences through exposure during their formative years to critical events – such as depressions, wars, or mass movements— that shape their partisan attachments (Beck 1984). Sometimes period effects are of such magnitude that they produce generational effects among young cohorts of voters just coming of political age, changing the basic party predispositions of these cohorts as they develop views of the political world that differ from previous age cohorts (Beck 1975; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Miller 1992).

Younger people, therefore, have less stable political attitudes than older adults and are more prone to be influenced by the social and political forces at work in the national context (Jennings and Niemi 1968, 1978). While scandals, diplomatic crises, and severe economic downturns rarely have a lasting effect on the more crystallized partisan

attachments of the older electorate, these large salient events can alter the partisan balance in the electorate by shaping the newly forming, still-malleable partisan attachments and attitudes of young adults (Bartels and Jackman 2014). Thus, the national political context matters when studying public opinion and vote choice of the young. The contested election results of 2000, 9/11 attacks, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the subsequent economic recession of 2008 would certainly qualify the 2000s as politically turbulent times that could explain both the increased attention to politics and the distinct attitudes and behavior of the youngest cohort of voters from 2004 to 2012. These attitudes can also help to explain the behavioral differences we saw at the ballot box between young and older voters.

THEORIES OF VOTE CHOICE

Generally, scholars in American politics consider there to be three primary models of voting that provide the foundation for many of the extant theories of voting behavior used today: the sociological (Columbia), rational choice (Rochester), and social-psychological (Michigan) models. My focus here is on the interplay between party identification as a key attitude conditioning voting behavior and the role of issues, candidates, and context when party identification is less developed. As such, my theoretical approach borrows from the latter two schools.

Most theories of vote choice and opinion dynamics draw on or are a response to the foundational work of scholars at the University of Michigan. Since the publication of *The American Voter* in 1960, the social-psychological theory of vote choice persists as a key attitudinal framework for understanding vote choice, emphasizing the role of enduring partisan commitments in shaping attitudes towards political objects (Campbell et al. 1960). From this perspective, party identification is a deeply-held psychological attachment that

is largely stable over time, and acts as a filter through which citizens view and interpret new political information. Party identification therefore shapes policy preferences and other political attitudes, but is largely unchanged by them. Decades of research since have found that the impact of partisanship on voting behavior is substantial, and party loyalties are generally the best predictor of vote choice (e.g. Bartels 2000; Hillygus and Shields 2008; Lewis-Beck et al. 2008). Therefore, we should expect party identification to heavily influence the vote choice of individuals who identify with one of the parties, particularly among strong identifiers. But among voters with weaker party ties, like young adults, party identification should exert a smaller influence on vote choice.

The rational choice framework, on the other hand, is a popular paradigm that allows for the incorporation of issue preferences and performance assessments as factors affecting the vote. In rational choice models, voters are assumed to have "selfish" preferences, and a rational voter will decide whether to turn out to vote and which candidate to vote for based on the voter's judgment of the expected personal or sociotropic benefits derived from one candidate winning over another (Aldrich 1993; Edlin, Gelman, and Kaplan 2007; Kinder and Kiewiet 1979). While *The American Voter* downplayed issue preferences as a major independent factor in vote choice, V.O. Key Jr. (1966) noted that "voters are not fools", arguing that voters base their decisions on the issue positions of the candidates and on their expectations of candidate performance in office, particularly on the important issues of the day.

Spatial voting theories like the proximity voting model, which fall under the rational choice framework, posit that parties and their candidates use issue positions to appeal to voters. The proximity model in particular proposes that a voter's policy preferences can be summarized as a single point on a liberal-conservative ideological spectrum, and the policy positions of the political candidates are also summarized to points

in that same space (Downs 1957; Enelow and Hinich 1984; Jessee 2009). Key to this theory is the assumption that a voter will cast her ballot for the candidate whose position is closest to her own. Thus, issue preferences of voters can and do have independent effects on the vote choice of individuals, and perhaps have a stronger effect on those with weaker partisan attachments.

In fact, while partisanship is a long-term factor affecting candidate choice, issue preferences and performance assessments (along with candidate qualities) are among the shorter-term factors that can affect both vote choice and partisanship as well. While the initial partisan beliefs of young people stem from socialization influences, revisionist models of party identification demonstrate that party identification is endogenous and may change in response to issue preferences, candidate evaluations, retrospective evaluations of party performance, and even vote choice (Achen 1992, 2002; Brody and Rothenberg 1988; Carsey and Layman 2006; Fiorina 1981; Franklin and Jackson 1983; Jackson 1975; Luskin, McIver, and Carmines 1989; Markus and Converse 1979; Page and Jones 1979).

An "impressionable years" hypothesis suggests that core predispositions like partisanship are malleable in young adulthood, and tend not to crystallize until the mid-to-late twenties (Franklin and Jackson 1983; Jennings and Markus 1984; Jennings and Niemi 1981). From this perspective, even if partisanship is largely stable, there is room for response to issues and other contextual factors, particularly in young adulthood (Beck and Jennings 1991; Markus 1979; Niemi and Jennings 1991). Some evidence has been found to show that predispositions like partisanship do not crystallize incrementally; rather, they crystallize in spurts in response to information-rich exogenous political events that are usually focused only on a narrow range of specific attitude objects (Sears and Valentino 1997). While these attitude objects are often political parties or candidates, the large

contentious issues on the national agenda during times of unrest, and perceived performance failures on those issues, can certainly be a catalyst for socialization.

For young people, then, partisanship is reinforced or weakened by their experiences with politics. While they are socialized into their initial political beliefs like party identification, I posit that the standard socialization processes were not as acute after the turn of the twenty-first century as they were prior due to the turbulent nature of the political context at the time young Millennials came of political age (i.e. became old enough to vote). This is coupled with evidence that family socialization processes are weakening as younger Baby Boomers and members of Generation X are less likely to discuss politics at home with their children (Lawless and Fox 2015). While party identification is nonetheless important and predictive for the vote choice of young people, I believe it is not as determinative to the vote when compared to its effects on older Americans, especially during periods where the national context demands attention such as the period during which we see the age gap in vote choice.

As such, my theory is that young people are particularly susceptible to the short-term factors influencing the vote—context, candidates, and issues—given their relatively malleable attachments to the parties. In periods of relative quiescence, these factors may not lead to attitudinal or behavioral differences between 18-29-year-olds and older Americans because young people simply would not be paying much attention to politics in the first place. But in times of political turbulence, they should be less anchored by party identification than older adults and more susceptible to national circumstances and context, particularly on the salient issues that personally affect them. In the context of the elections from 2004 to 2012, two unpopular wars, a terrible economy, and high levels of unemployment among young people produced a toxic stew for Republicans. The higher rates of Democratic preference among young people, relative to older adults, were not so

much due to an attraction to the Democratic Party and its candidates; rather, 18-29-year-olds were more likely to attribute blame to Republicans for their performance in office and were therefore repelled by the Republican brand. Their weaker partisan ties resulted in a more forceful pro-Democratic shift in aggregate opinion and behavior due to the national context compared to older adults, who had deeper-rooted partisan predispositions and more experience with politics to resist the winds of change. As such, Chapters 3 through 5 of this dissertation measure young people's reactions to both the short- and long-term forces affecting vote choice relative to the older electorate to test this theory.

PARTY IDENTIFICATION AND AFFECTIVE POLARIZATION

The first two hypotheses I test in Chapter 3 are actually alternative hypotheses to my theory. The most conventional theory for the age gap in vote choice is that young people simply like Democratic Party and its candidate better, are identifying at higher rates with the party than older adults, and are voting based on their partisanship. Thus, my first two hypotheses in Chapter 3 are (H1) that a larger proportion of 18-29-year-olds identified with the Democratic Party between 2004 and 2012 than older adults and (H2) young Democratic identifiers and leaners, in the aggregate, hold warmer affective feelings towards their party than older adults. This second hypothesis stems from a recent line of research that has uncovered the rise of affective polarization among everyday Americans in recent years (e.g. Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Levendusky 2013). From a group identity perspective, affective polarization occurs when individuals view opposing partisans (as members of the outgroup) with increasingly greater dislike, and co-partisans (as the ingroup) positively.[7] More specifically, it is the tendency of Republican identifiers to view

[7] The "outgroup" is the group to which a person does not belong, while the "ingroup" is the group to which a person does belong.

Democrats negatively and other Republicans positively while Democratic identifiers indicate unfavorable feelings towards Republicans and positive feelings towards other Democrats (Campbell et al. 1960; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). Therefore, it is possible that young people are simply identifying more as Democrats and like the Democratic Party and its candidates to a greater extent than older adults.

The phenomenon of affective polarization is based on social identity theory, which posits that members of an in-group will associate negative or undesirable traits to members of the outgroup (Tajfel 1970; Tajfel and Turner 1979). It is true that party identifiers have been progressively antagonistic towards political elites of the outparty in recent years, which is reflected in increasingly biased evaluations of national conditions depending on which party controls the White House (Bartels 2002; Jacobson 2009; Hetherington and Rudolph 2016). But this out-partisan dislike has extended to even rank-and-file members of the opposing party today (Iyengar and Westwood 2014).

Affect towards the parties may also be produced or changed through retrospective evaluations of party performance in office and assessments of current national conditions, particularly for individuals who are less familiar with politics (Fiorina 1981; Hetherington and Rudolph 2016). The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the economic collapse in 2008 were critical national events that were difficult for even the most politically disinterested individuals to ignore, and could certainly have led to negative assessments of the performance of the George W. Bush administration and the Republican Party. These events may therefore not only impact party identification among young Americans, but influence feelings towards the parties as well.

Given the less crystallized partisanship of young people (Franklin and Jackson 1983), I suspect that H1 and H2 are incorrect and that affective polarization is *less* pronounced among the younger electorate compared to older partisans. This is consistent

with my theory that young people are less anchored to the political parties which could lead to aggregate differences in voting behavior from older individuals if young people are affected to a greater degree by political context. Therefore, if H1 and H2 do not hold, it is likely that young voters are generally are more *dis*affected by the Republican Party than older individuals are. Even if positive affect towards the Democratic Party has not grown over time in recent elections, positive sentiment towards the Republican Party may be weaker still. As such, my third hypothesis (H3) is that young Republican identifiers and leaners are less affectively attached to the Republican Party and like the Republican Party to a lesser extent than older Americans. On a similar note, my fourth hypothesis stems more generally from my theory that young people are less attached to the parties, and that (H4) older partisans of both parties are more affectively polarized than younger Americans.

It is prudent to also examine attitudes about the presidential candidates themselves since affective considerations of the presidential candidates at the top of the tickets, as symbols of the party, may differ between young and older Americans. It is also useful to get a sense as to whether young people just liked the Democratic candidates as individuals better than the Republican candidates since studies show that candidate traits have an independent effect on vote choice as well (e.g. Kinder 1986; Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk 1986). Therefore, my fifth hypothesis (H5) is that young partisan identifiers and leaners of both parties just liked the Democratic candidates better than older Americans from 2004 to 2012 as reflected by candidate thermometer scores. More likely, however, is the alternative that (H6) young partisans and leaners of both parties just *disliked* Republican candidates more than older adults during this period due to the toxicity of the party's brand.

Finally, because of their relative inexperience with politics, it is easier for young people to retrospectively attribute blame for problems they directly experience rather than cast prospective assessments of future candidate performance (Fiorina 1981). As such, my

seventh hypothesis (H7) is that any difference in affect between young and older Americans will be reflected in assessments of the incumbent president. In particular, I expect that assessments of George W. Bush will be much lower among young Americans in 2004 and 2008 than among older adults as they evaluate his conduct and blame him for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the economic recession. The results from hypotheses 5 through 7 in this chapter will help inform my analyses in Chapter 5, which includes candidate trait assessments and retrospective assessments of candidate and party performance in office as factors affecting vote choice.

ISSUE VOTING AND SPATIAL THEORY

As discussed above, there is a general consensus among scholars that the masses have become affectively polarized in recent decades (e.g. Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Levendusky 2013). There is also little doubt that party elites have become increasingly polarized over policy preferences in the last fifty years (e.g. Abramowitz 2010; Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2005; Layman 1999; Theriault 2008). But there is considerable debate as to whether the masses have polarized on substantive policy matters as well. Some scholars argue that most citizens are still moderate, but because their choices at the ballot box have become more disparate and extreme, it appears as if they have polarized on issues (Levendusky 2009). Other researchers contend that rank and file partisans have in fact become polarized ideologically (Abramowitz 2010; Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Mason 2015).

The sources of issue attitudes are diverse and may include ideology, core political values, material self-interest, group identity and attachment, or political events and experiences (Hillygus and Shields 2008, 27). When individuals feel strongly about issues on which they differ with their party, the internal conflict that is produced may be powerful

enough to cause party loyalties to change (Campbell et al. 1960; Carsey and Layman 2006), particularly on polarizing issues of the day (Abramowitz and Saunders 1998). This process of adjustment is more pronounced among younger voters than among older voters (Franklin and Jackson 1983; Jackson 1975). Policy attitudes also have an independent impact on vote choice depending on the personal importance of the issue to a voter, and whether a citizen can see a difference in the candidates' stands on that issue (Brody and Page 1972).

To reiterate, I posit that young people are especially susceptible to the short-term factors influencing the vote, including issue context and issue preferences, particularly in times of political turmoil. Given the mixed evidence found by scholars on substantive polarization, I investigate four hypotheses in Chapter 4. Because of their greater propensity to identify as "liberal" than previous generations at the same age (Keeter, Horowitz, and Tyson 2008; Kirby and Kawashima-Ginsburg 2009), it is possible that the age gap in vote choice observed from 2004 to 2012 is, in part, due to a leftward shift in ideological issue positions among young people and that these issue preferences are closer to those of the Democratic Party and its candidates. As such, my first hypothesis (H1) is that, in the aggregate, young people hold more liberal positions on social issues, foreign policy issues, and economic issues than older people, and that over time these issue preferences have moved further to the left.

Of course, it might be the case that young people have always been liberal and that the strong preference for Democratic candidates among 18-29-year-olds in recent elections is due to the growing ideological polarization of candidates. Because young people usually do not usually pay much attention to politics, under normal political conditions they may not be able to differentiate between the stands of the political candidates—a necessary condition to vote based on issue preferences (Brody and Page 1972). But because of the

turbulent political climate from 2004 to 2012, it is plausible that young people were more aware of differences between the candidates' stands on the important issues of the day. Thus, my second hypothesis (H2), which is not necessarily exclusive to H1, is that the perceived policy positions of candidates have grown more distinct in recent years among 18-29-year-olds, especially from 2004 to 2012. If this hypothesis rings true, we should see the candidates' perceived positions on these issues become more extreme in recent presidential elections.

Regardless of whether either or both of the first two hypotheses hold, my third hypothesis (H3) is that young people are proximally closer to Democratic candidates in terms of issue preferences in recent elections (foreign policy and economic issues especially), and that they are using those issue proximities when making their vote choice. Finally, given their lack of political engagement during times of relative political quiescence, my fourth hypothesis (H4) is that young people used issue preferences— particularly on foreign policy and economic issues— to a greater extent during the period from 2004 to 2012 than in earlier election years because politics and issues were not as salient in prior years. In other words, issue proximities are expected to have a statistically significant effect on the candidate preference of young people to a greater degree in the period from 2004 to 2012 relative to earlier elections. This can manifest in two ways. Either more issue areas should have a significant impact on candidate choice during the period of the observed age gap, or a few specific issue areas should have a more substantive impact on candidate preference, holding all other variables at their means.

RETROSPECTIVE VOTING AND ISSUE OWNERSHIP

Still under the umbrella of the rational choice framework, but from a somewhat different perspective than spatial theory, the issue ownership theory incorporates the

importance of electoral context to voting and candidate choice by bringing into the equation the degree of political turmoil and the extent to which parties offer distinct policy choices on important national problems. According to the issue ownership theory of voting, campaigns strategically emphasize issues on which their parties are perceived to hold an advantage to prime their salience when citizens make their vote decision (Kaufmann 2004; Petrocik 1996). This theory states that issues are ultimately decisive to election outcomes because *salient* issues tend to work to the advantage of one party over the other. Unlike spatial theory and the proximity models explored in Chapter 4, what is key to the issue ownership theory is not the candidates' specific stands on policies, but what *problems* they promise to resolve.

What the public perceives as national problems that need solving depends both on existing national conditions and whether campaigns prime the issues they "own". Ownership of an issue area depends on what the social bases of the parties (i.e. the groups making up the parties' coalitions) want from their party and a party's historical record of performance in handling those problems (Kaufmann 2004; Petrocik 1996). These reputations are regularly tested and reinforced by the choices made by political officeholders. While issue emphases in campaigns are specific to candidates, Republicans generally "own" issue areas like moral values, law and order, and tax and spend issues while Democrats "own" social welfare programs and issues of racial discrimination (Petrocik 1996). The economy, foreign relations, and government functioning are issue areas where ownership is almost entirely performance-based, and incumbent failures in these areas can provide a short term "lease" to the other party. Thus, performance-issue reputations can be gained and lost in short periods of time (Petrocik, Benoit, and Hasen 2003).

Retrospective evaluations of party performance in office can also impact candidate choice, particularly on issues an individual considers important (Fiorina 1981, 200; Fournier et al. 2003). Directly experienced or perceived events and conditions contribute to performance evaluations, and both in turn contribute to future expectations about party performance (Fiorina 1981, 197). A country in bad times can expect performance issue concerns to benefit the challenger since the incumbent party can be retrospectively blamed for national problems in times of crises including wars, failed policies, economic downturns, or corruption. Even if more voters are concerned with problems owned by the incumbent's party, the incumbent can still lose if bad times elicit substantial attention to performance problems (Petrocik 1996). Therefore, an issue ownership interpretation of an election has three expectations: 1) each party has distinct issue handling reputations, and their ability to handle national problems depends on the performance record of the incumbent, 2) candidates focus the election on issues advantageous to themselves, and 3) voters will choose their preferred candidate based on the issues made salient by those campaigns.

Thus, the issue ownership theory really rests on the idea of issue salience, in line with a prominent body of research which suggests elite discourse determines the most salient considerations in people's minds when evaluating political objects (Converse 1964; Zaller 1992). The reception and acceptance of elite discourse is contingent upon political awareness and interest since exposure to elite discourse occurs most frequently through exposure to political news and information. While the most politically aware are exposed to more elite messages, they are also better able to resist messages that run counter to their prior political beliefs. People low in awareness, including the young, rarely receive these messages and generally remain unaware of politics. But when events and issues within the political system permeate into their immediate experiences, like wars and economic

recession, even young people may become more interested and politically involved. At that point, more of these persuasive communications reach them, and young people are less able to resist persuasive messages that are inconsistent with their relatively weak predispositions. In fact, major foreign policy and domestic crises that are framed as compelling human dramas can gain the attention of even the most politically inattentive segments of the population when soft news media—including satirical comedy shows, daytime or late-night talk shows, and entertainment news programs—lead entertainment-seeking viewers to become incidentally informed about national events and political candidates (Baum 2002; Baumgartner and Morris 2006).

As such, evaluating George W. Bush's conduct in office may help explain the shift away from the Republican Party by the young from 2004 through 2012. Retrospective evaluations of Republican performance on *salient* national problems are expected to be large factors in candidate preference of the young from 2004 to 2012 as they consider extant circumstances and party performance on these issues. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan increased the salience of foreign policy issues, as most Americans knew someone directly impacted by troop deployments during these engagements. Similarly, young people were affected by the 2008 economic recession to a greater degree than older adults, and faced higher levels of unemployment for a longer period of time (Maloney 2010). Republican failures on these performance issues provided Democrats with "lease" on these issue areas, creating a political environment that favored the Democrats. These short-term forces, I argue, affected the candidate preference of young Americans to a large extent. While these short-term factors likely played a role in the candidate preference equations of older adults, their attitudes were likely anchored by their more crystallized partisanship. Thus, we should see party factors playing a bigger role in the candidate choice

decisions among older Americans as well, moderating the effects of the short-term forces to an extent.

Furthermore, moral issues[8] rose in prominence among Republicans in 2004—an issue area owned by the Republicans that is also at odds with a cohort of young voters who are less religious and more educated than previous generations. George W. Bush's 2004 campaign highlighted the conservative values and issue preferences of Born-again and evangelical Protestant activists, leading to more ideologically extreme issue preferences on social issues within the Republican Party (Jacobson 2009). Indeed, moral issues are an area unexplored by the issue proximities in Chapter 4, and prospective performance on moral issues may have exacerbated the age gap in electoral choice.

Chapter 5 is my capstone chapter, incorporating all the elements of my theory into one set of analyses to test. Again, I argue that short term factors such as candidate evaluations, prospective issue performance on the salient issues of a campaign, and retrospective evaluations of Republican performance on issues are expected to be large factors in the vote choices of the young from 2004 to 2012, as the major issues facing the nation permeated into the lives of young people to the point where it was difficult for even the normally disengaged youth to ignore. While older Americans are likely to be impacted by these factors as well, their more crystallized partisan attachments should take precedence and temper the effects of these short-term factors.

Because there is plenty of evidence to suggest candidates and their campaigns emphasize the issues their party "owns" or "leases" (e.g. Kaufmann 2004; Petrocik 1996; Petrocik, Benoit, and Hansen 2003; Pope and Woon 2009), I assume this to be true for the elections from 2004 to 2012. Instead of measuring party reputations using media content

[8]These are issues generally associated with the activism of the Religious Right such as abortion, stem cell research, and gay rights/marriage.

analysis like in many issue ownership studies, I analyze alternative measures of the parties' issue-handling reputations in Chapter 5 using open-ended party and candidate likes-dislikes responses in the American National Election Studies. Not only do these open-ended party and candidate likes-dislikes questions allow me to measure the salient considerations individuals use when evaluating the parties and candidates, they also allow me to measure public attitudes about prospective issue performance and retrospective assessments of party performance in office. I use these data to test five hypotheses. My first hypothesis (H1) is that perceived Republican failures on performance issues—especially in the areas of economic and foreign policy—should provide Democrats with a temporary lease on these issue areas from 2004 through 2012 among both older and younger adults.

More directly related to my theory, my second hypothesis (H2) is that short-term forces, including candidate assessments and both prospective and retrospective issue assessments, should have a strong impact on the candidate choice of 18-29-year-olds from 2004 to 2012 relative to their effects in previous election years due to turbulent national conditions and the critical nature of the problems on the political agenda during this period. In the period directly prior to 2004, it is feasible that political events were not salient enough for young people to use prospective issue performance assessments or retrospective performance assessments to distinguish between the candidates, and that party factors would come into play more in times of relative political quiescence.

Also, more directly related to my theory, my third hypothesis (H3) is that party-related factors should factor into candidate choice more frequently among older adults relative to younger voters in all years under study due to their more crystallized party attachments. This should be especially true in recent elections given higher levels of affective polarization among older Americans (Chapter 3). This should also be particularly

true during the turbulent period from 2004 to 2012 as period effects should weaken the basic party attachments of young people (e.g. Beck 1975). Finally, as an interesting companion era to the 2004-2012 period also rife with political turbulence, my fourth hypothesis (H4) is that performance issues and candidate assessments also factor into candidate choice of young people in 1972 and 1976 to a greater degree than in the subsequent period of political quiescence.

The seminal studies of political socialization and attitudinal development suggest the attitudes and opinions of young people should, for the most part, look similar to those of older adults. But attitudes and opinions are at their most malleable when individuals just come of political age, and period effects may have a particularly strong impact on the young, creating generational differences in opinion. While most theories of voting behavior do not include extant national circumstances to explain vote choice, these contextual factors may be particularly influential on the political behavior of young people. Thus, my theory combines elements from many theories of attitude development and vote choice, and to my knowledge is the first attempt at bringing these theories together to explain the age gap in vote choice we observed between 2004 and 2012. As such, the overall structure in this dissertation is to first explore the attitudes and emotions of young people relative to older Americans in Chapter 3. The primary aim is to explore differences in affect towards the parties, though it also investigates differences in attitudes towards the presidential candidates and the incumbent president. Chapter 4 examines prospective issue preferences and proximities to the candidates, and tests their effects on candidate choice. Chapter 5 analyzes context in a comprehensive manner, examining the salience of party factors, candidate factors, and especially prospective and retrospective assessments of candidate and party performance on national problems.

Chapter 3: Partisanship and Affective Polarization

Young voters became a distinct political force in American elections from 2004 to 2012. Given their pro-Democratic behavior in elections during this period, it is valuable to study the perceptions of young Americans and their opinions of the parties and political candidates independently of the attitudes of older Americans. Might the young voters of the Millennial[9] generation bring a distinctly pro-Democratic, and thus polarizing, set of attitudes and perceptions to the table?

As discussed in Chapter 2, the social-psychological theory focuses on partisanship as the primary driver of political attitudes and their resulting behaviors (Campbell et al. 1960). From this perspective, party identification is a psychological attachment to one of the parties that shapes policy preferences and other political attitudes but is largely unchanged by them; therefore, the partisan lens through which an individual observes politics affects how he or she evaluates political candidates and issue preferences. A related theory of party identification suggests party ID is a social identity or group attachment, so rather than acting as a perceptual screen, party identifiers take on the positions advocated by their group (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Hyman 1959; Stanley and Niemi 2006). From either of these perspectives, party identification is exogenous and shapes our issue preferences and political beliefs but is largely unchanged by them. While a number of revisionist models question the unchanging nature of party identification and argue it is endogenous with issue positions (e.g. Achen 1992, 2002; Carsey and Layman 2006; Fiorina

[9] Given that the 18-29 year old age brackets in 2008 and 2012 consisted entirely of members of the Millennial generation, and comprised a majority of 18-29-year-olds in 2004, I sometimes use the terms "Millennial" and "young" interchangeably when discussing young Americans in recent elections. The boundaries for what defines a "Millennial" vary from scholar to scholar, and a distinct end-boundary as to who is considered a Millennial has yet to be determined. However, it is likely that the youngest segment of the electorate in 2016 (18-22 year olds) are members of the post-Millennial generation.

1981), party identification is nonetheless the single best predictor of vote choice in a campaign (e.g. Bartels 2000; Hillygus and Shields 2008; Lewis-Beck et al. 2008). Therefore, it is possible that young people simply like the Democrats better and are identifying with the Democratic Party at higher rates in recent elections than older Americans.

PARTY IDENTIFICATION AND POLARIZATION

There has been a proliferation of literature on the concept of polarization in recent years, though it is clear that there are three major sources of disagreement over what polarization entails. The first source of disagreement relates to the technical definition of the concept, which I will explain further below. The second source of disagreement is over who is polarized— is this a phenomenon occurring only among elites, or are rank-and-file partisans polarized as well? The third source of disagreement resides in the nature of polarization among the masses (if it exists), and whether it is ideological or affective in nature.

Regarding the first source of disagreement, polarization is, to some, a process-oriented concept characterized by the widening differences in group preferences between the parties concurrent with growing intra-party cohesion in attitudes and opinions (Jacobson 2009; Abramowitz and Saunders 2008). To others, a more literal outcome-oriented definition of polarization focuses on the magnitude of divisions within the electorate, where large divisions in attitudes on an issue results in a bi-modal clustering of opinions at opposite ends of a distribution (Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2005). Scholars advocating the latter definition criticize claims of process-oriented polarization by arguing that as the divide between party elites grows wider, citizens are simply following their lead and "sorting" themselves into groups rather than actually taking more extreme positions on

matters of public policy. These researchers claim that instead, due to relatively low levels of knowledge among the public about politics, most Americans have the tendency to report middle-scale responses to questions on ideology and policy because they do not hold deeply-seated opinions on many issues (Hetherington and Rudolph 2016). Indeed, there are many issues on which bi-modal distributions of opinion do not appear as would be expected from the process-oriented conception of polarization.

Addressing the second source of disagreement, which is related to the first, there is little doubt that party elites have become increasingly polarized over the last fifty years (e.g. Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2005; Theriault 2008) largely over policy preferences (Layman 1999). But there is considerable debate as to whether the masses have polarized on substantive matters of public policy as well. Some argue that citizens have not polarized since most citizens, as noted above, hold moderate policy positions. Instead, their choices at the ballot box have become more disparate and extreme, so partisan sorting makes it appear as if the masses have polarized (Levendusky 2009). Others contend that everyday citizens have in fact become ideologically polarized on issues (Abramowitz 2010; Abramowitz and Saunders 2008).

The third source of disagreement stems from a more recent group of studies which contend that rather than polarizing on issues and ideology, the type of polarization occurring among everyday Americans is *affective* in nature (e.g. Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Levendusky 2013). From a group identity perspective, affective polarization occurs when individuals view opposing partisans (as members of the outgroup) with increasing dislike, and co-partisans (as the ingroup) positively.[10] More specifically, affective polarization is the tendency of Republican identifiers to view Democrats negatively and

[10] The "outgroup" is the group to which a person does not belong, while the "ingroup" is the group to which a person does belong.

other Republicans positively while Democratic identifiers indicate unfavorable feelings towards Republicans and positive feelings towards other Democrats (Campbell et al. 1960; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002).

Given these alternative standards of polarization—affect and ideology—I investigate whether either exists among young people today. In this chapter, I investigate the possibility of differences in affective polarization between the older and younger electorate. In Chapter 4 I explore the prospect of disparities in substantive polarization, or aggregate differences in opinions and behavior based on issue positions.

AFFECTIVE POLARIZATION

When it comes to affective polarization, there are a number of contributing factors that can lead an individual to polarized feelings towards the party with which she does not identify. First, the polarization of elites may act as a cue to the masses to follow elite opinion (Key 1966). If political elites are becoming increasingly antagonistic towards each other, citizens may be adopting those sentiments as well. Today's adversarial media environment and the negative tone of campaigns may also encourage stronger affective reactions among those exposed to such messaging (Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Hetherington and Rudolph 2016).

Affect towards the parties may also be produced or changed through retrospective evaluations of party performance in office, as well as assessments of current national conditions— particularly for individuals who are less familiar with politics. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the economic collapse in 2008, were critical national events that were difficult for even the most politically disinterested individuals to ignore. Therefore, the conduct of the George W. Bush administration could have led to negative assessments of the incumbent party's performance. The period effects produced by critical events like

these can change the basic party predispositions of young voters as they develop views of the political world that differ from previous age cohorts (Beck 1975; Ghitza and Gelman 2014; Miller 1992). These events may therefore not only impact party identification among young Americans, but influence feelings or emotions towards the parties as well. Indeed, even individuals with relatively little political experience like young people can express how they *feel* about politics and the parties rather than provide a substantive determination as to what they *think* about politics.

I examine the aggregate partisan attitudes of 18-29-year-olds compared to older individuals using American National Election Survey feeling thermometers from 1992 to 2016. My theoretical perspective is simple: party identification is a dominant attitude that shapes political orientations and preferences. The conventional wisdom for the age gap in vote choice is that young people just like the Democrats better and are identifying as Democrats at higher rates than older Americans (e.g. Cozby 2013; Rundio 2008). If this is the case, the strong Democratic preference among young people (and resulting age gap in vote choice) would easily be explained by young voters voting based on their partisanship. As such, my first hypothesis (H1) is that a greater proportion of 18-29-year-olds identified with the Democratic Party between 2004 and 2012 than older adults.

In addition, as mentioned many times before, partisanship is among the attitudes known to be more malleable among young Americans relative to older citizens (Franklin 1984). Older voters tend to be stronger partisans since party identification strengthens as a function of the length of time an individual prefers and votes for a party (Converse 1976; Franklin 1984). Considering this, it is also possible that affective attitudes towards the parties are similarly malleable among individuals just reaching political age. If H1 holds and young people are identifying with the Democratic Party at higher rates than older adults, it is likely that they hold stronger affective feelings towards the Democratic Party

as a result. As such, my second hypothesis (H2) is that young Democratic identifiers and leaners hold warmer feelings or affect toward the Democratic Party than older Americans in each election year from 2004 to 2012.

If H1 and H2 do not hold, and young people are not identifying with the Democratic Party at higher rates or hold warmer affect towards the Democratic Party than individuals over 30 years of age, it is equally conceivable that 18-29-year-olds simply dislike the Republican Party more than older adults. Antipathy towards the Republicans is likely given that young voters were socialized into politics during the turbulent political environment that characterized the George W. Bush administration, which included two controversial wars and the collapse of the financial system. Therefore, my third hypothesis (H3) is that young Republican identifiers and leaners demonstrate less affective attachment to the Republican Party than their older counterparts in each election year from 2004 through 2012, and therefore do not like the Republican Party as much as older Republicans. In fact, given my theory that young people are generally less attached to the parties, we should expect affective polarization to be weaker among younger Americans since their partisan ties have yet to take deep root. Thus, a fourth hypothesis (H4) is that older partisans of both parties are more affectively polarized than their younger counterparts in each election year under study. If this hypothesis holds, partisanship and feelings about the parties among the young were likely not the drivers of the age gap in vote choice from 2004 to 2012. It would also speak to the necessity of additional research exploring the attitudes of young Americans that led to the behavioral differences we saw at the ballot box.

CANDIDATE AND INCUMBENT ASSESSMENTS

While party identification is a long-term predisposition that dominates vote choice and tends to affect attitudes towards the candidates, my theory is that the weaker party ties of young voters leaves open the possibility that they are affected to a greater extent by the short-term forces that impact candidate choice, like candidate qualities, political context, and issues. It is therefore prudent to perform additional analyses using ANES thermometers, and investigate attitudes towards the presidential candidates themselves.[11]

Some scholars suggest that "personality" or trait characteristics of a presidential candidate provide the best explanation for shifts in the vote from one election to the next (Markus and Converse 1979; Stokes 1966). Assessments of a candidate's competence, integrity, and charisma may inform voters of how he or she will perform in office (Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk 1986). Some voters may use superficial characteristics such as a candidate's style or attractiveness as criteria when making their vote decisions. While somewhat troubling for democracy, using superficial characteristics to assess candidates is not uncommon since today's media coverage of campaigns tends to focus on these personal characteristics rather than substantive policy ideas for their sensational, headline-grabbing nature (Patterson 1993; Gilens, Vavreck, and Cohen 2007). Evidence shows that these media narratives do affect citizens' perceptions of the candidates and their ability to handle the job (Johnston, Hagen, and Jamieson 2004).

Therefore, candidate factors may contribute to the age gap in vote choice we observed from 2004 to 2012. While it is difficult to determine exactly what candidate thermometer evaluations measure, as they likely incorporate a number of factors including personal trait evaluations and the policy preferences of the candidates (both of which will

[11] Party and candidate thermometer assessments are highly correlated, and likely endogenous to each other. Thermometer assessments of candidates are also endogenous to vote choice. However, it is nonetheless useful to independently investigate candidate thermometer assessments for any unusual patterns as well.

be explored further in Chapters 4 and 5), it is nonetheless useful to examine whether aggregate candidate thermometer evaluations of the candidates diverge by age group to inform my next empirical chapters. It is possible that young people simply liked the Democratic candidates better than older adults from 2004 to 2012, as "likeability" is something that pundits and journalists discuss in each election cycle. As such, my fifth hypothesis (H5) is that young partisan identifiers and leaners of *both* parties held warmer feelings towards the Democratic candidates than their older partisan counterparts from 2004 to 2012. If this is indeed the case, young Democrats should feel warmer towards the Democratic candidate than older Democrats for the years of interest; similarly, young Republicans should hold warmer feelings towards the Democratic candidates than older Republicans.

It is doubtful, though, that candidate "likeability" alone would be the primary driving force for the Democratic advantage among young people for two reasons. First, there were two different presidential candidates on the Democratic side from 2004 to 2012. While political pundits (and even some social scientists) suggest Barack Obama's likeability won him the presidency in 2008 (e.g. Bligh and Kohles 2009; Cannon 2012; O'Reilly 2012; Olbermann 2012), and no one doubts that Obama utilized his charisma and rhetorical gifts in his presidential campaigns, John Kerry certainly did not capture the same amount of attention nor was a "likeable" a candidate in 2004 (Stevenson and Elder 2004). In addition, young voters voted for Democratic candidates at the congressional and gubernatorial levels at higher rates, even in midterm elections, than older individuals during this period as well (Barr and Moore 2006; CIRCLE 2010). So this phenomenon was not isolated to presidential-level elections nor to presidential candidates.

Consistent with my theory, it more plausible that rather than being attracted to the Democratic candidates, young people were repelled by the Republican candidates to a

greater extent than older individuals as the Republican brand was tainted by the performance of the party in office during the George W. Bush administration. Thus, my sixth hypothesis (H6) is young Americans of both parties will hold more negative assessments of the Republican candidates than older Americans in each election year from 2004 to 2012.

Finally, I look at thermometer assessment ratings of the incumbent president. Because young people have less experience with politics, the current state of affairs should color their assessments of the incumbent president to a greater extent than older Americans (Fiorina 1981, 46-54). Young partisan identifiers and leaners may be particularly pleased with incumbent presidents when national conditions are good, and especially displeased with those incumbents during periods of turbulence. Therefore, my seventh hypothesis (H7) is that retrospective assessments of incumbent performance in office among young partisans of both parties should exaggerate the tendencies of their older counterparts. If this is the case, young partisans of both parties should hold cooler feelings towards the incumbent during periods of turmoil, especially towards George W. Bush in 2004 and 2008, than older partisans of their respective parties.

DATA AND MEASURES

Using American National Election Studies Time Series survey data from 1992 to 2016,[12] I first calculate the proportions of 18-29-year-olds and 30+ individuals who identify with each party, as Independents, or who have no preference or identify with a third party. Then, among those who identify with or lean towards one of the major parties,

[12] I extend my analysis back to 1992 because ANES surveys prior to 1992 did not include weight variables to account for selection probabilities and nonresponse to maintain consistency. Because affective polarization is a relatively recent phenomenon (e.g. Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Hetherington and Rudolph 2016), extending the analysis back two and a half decades is sufficient to pick up on changes in attitudes towards the parties.

I examine aggregate changes in three types of indicators of inter-party social distance—citizens' feelings towards the parties themselves, changes in inter-party social distance (i.e. affective polarization), and attitudes towards the candidates and incumbents at the top of each party's tickets. To determine whether emotions and rates of affective polarization differ between young and older Americans, I use feeling thermometers for the parties and candidates that run on a 0-100 scale, where values from below the neutral point of 50 indicate cooler feelings towards the subject and values above 50 suggest warmer feelings towards an individual or group. I use the ANES pre-election thermometer assessments for candidates and parties in my analyses to minimize any spillover effects the election results may have on public attitudes in the post-election thermometers.

In addition, I create a common survey-based measure of affective polarization for each individual by calculating the difference between a partisan's outparty and inparty feeling thermometer ratings for the parties, producing negative polarization scores.[13] Feeling thermometer ratings, though, are subject to a positivity bias that influences evaluations of political objects (Knight 1984). While this bias is a systematic error that exists in the aggregate, there is also a wide variation in individuals' personalities. Some people have generally cooler personalities or more negative while others are naturally warmer positive. At the suggestion of Marc Hetherington, I account for this variation in response patterns by calculating each respondent's mean score for all post-election group thermometers and subtract this average from each of their pre-election candidate and party thermometer assessments.[14] The practical effect of doing so adjusts the scale for each

[13] Previous research indicates that while self-identified party identifiers reflect the highest levels of polarization, partisan leaners also show significant levels of partisan affect and behave like partisans (Iyengar and Westwood 2015). Because of this, I group leaners in with party identifiers for the purpose of analysis.

[14] The number of post-election group thermometers included on ANES surveys varied from year to year, from a low of 19 thermometers in 1996 to a high of 33 thermometers in 2004. To preserve the number of cases under analysis, if an individual did not provide a response to one or more group thermometer

individual such that their feeling thermometer ratings for the candidates and parties are a deviation from a baseline created from their respective average thermometer scores. The resulting adjusted thermometer ratings are centered around a neutral point of zero, with increasingly negative values indicating greater coolness towards an individual or group, and values above zero suggest warmer feelings towards an individual or group.

After calculating the outparty-inparty polarization scores and adjusted thermometer ratings for individuals, I compute the aggregate thermometer means for two age groups— 18 to 29-year-olds, and everyone else over 30 years of age— and perform three separate difference-of-means tests for each adjusted party thermometer, adjusted candidate thermometer, incumbent thermometer, and the outparty-inparty polarization scores for every year from 1992 through 2016. For each thermometer or polarization score, I first perform a difference-of-means test between all 18-29-year-olds and all individuals over 30 years of age, regardless of partisanship. I then disaggregate each age group by partisanship, running a second difference-of-means test between young and older Democratic identifiers and leaners, and a third difference-of-means test between young and older Republicans for each thermometer to determine whether there are significant differences in attitudes between young and older partisans in each election year under study.

Next, I plotted the average adjusted thermometer ratings for all older and younger respondents, all Democratic respondents by age group, and Republican respondents by age group on the same graphs. Young respondents were plotted using dotted lines, while older Americans were plotted using dashed lines. Black lines signify the averages for all respondents, while red lines identify Republicans and blue lines Democrats. Regular dots indicate no statistically significant difference between the young and older age groups.

variables, his or her average group thermometer rating was calculated using only those thermometers for which he or she provided a response.

Yellow diamonds indicate a statistically significant difference of mean between young and older groups as the p<.05 level or better. Green diamonds indicate a statistically significant difference at the less traditional p<.1 level.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table 3.1: Party Identification by Year and Age Group, in Percentages

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
Republican							
18-29	24	21	16	20	17	17	33
30 and Over	26	29	27	31	28	26	26
Democrat							
18-29	27	31	28	31	28	33	23
30 and Over	38	40	36	32	35	34	34
Independent							
18-29	42	36	41	45	46	44	40
30 and Over	30	24	25	30	30	33	33
No Pref/3rd Party							
18-29	7	11	15	4	8	5	4
30 and Over	6	7	12	7	6	7	7
18-29 Net (D-R)	**3**	**10**	**12**	**11**	**11**	**16**	**-10**
30+ Net (D-R)	**12**	**11**	**11**	**1**	**7**	**8**	**-8**

A cursory glance at party identification rates in the ANES data suggests there was about equal movement in identification with both the Democratic and Republican parties among the young between 2000 and 2004 (Table 3.1). Around forty-five percent of 18-29-year-olds identified as Independent in both 2004 and 2008 on the directional 3-point party identification question[15], indicating that young people were actually reluctant to identify

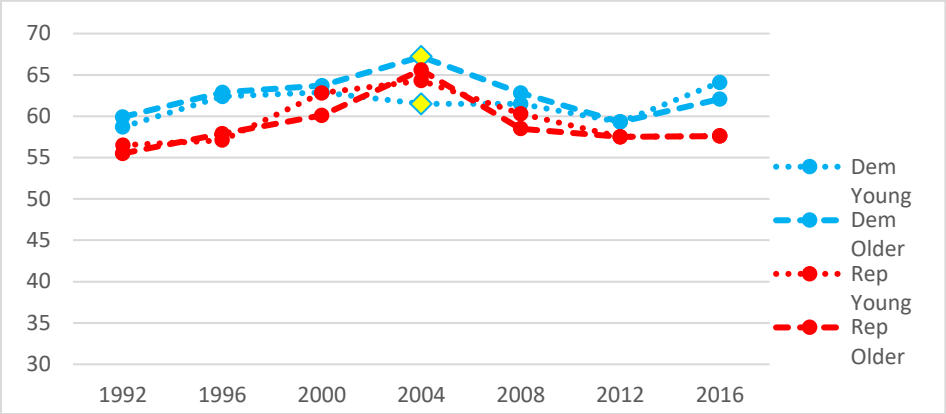
[15] The "direction" question to determine party identification reads, "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or what?". The follow-up "intensity" question comes in two forms. For individuals who identify as either a Democrat or Republicans, the

with either party during this period (though they lean towards the Democrats on the follow-up intensity question and behave like partisans). In fact, Democratic identification among young people actually dropped between 2004 and 2008 (from 31% to 28%) even though the proportion preferring the Democratic candidate at the ballot box grew larger in 2008. Plus, in each year from 2004 to 2012, a higher proportion of individuals over the age of 30 identified as Democrats than young people. This is pretty compelling evidence to reject H1—there was no sudden shift in party identification towards the Democrats among young people, nor were they identifying with the Democratic Party at higher rates than older adults. We can reject the conventional wisdom used to explain the age gap in vote choice between 2004 and 2012. This is, so far, consistent with my theory that young people are generally less attached to the parties.

Next, looking at the average group thermometer ratings used to create the adjusted thermometer ratings for candidates and parties (Figure 3.1 and Table 3.2), we see that there were no statistical or substantive differences between young partisans and their older counterparts with the exception of 2004. In 2004, the average group thermometer score for young Democrats dropped from the 2000 average while the mean group score for older Democrats increased substantially. This resulted in a 5.7-point gap between the age groups,

question reads, "Would you call yourself a strong [Democrat/Republican] or a not very strong [Democrat/Republican]?" For individuals who identify as Independents on the direction question, the follow up is, "Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?" As Miller (1992) discusses, there is actually a distinction between party identification and partisanship. Party identification suggests the presence of a psychological attachment to one of the parties, and is measured through the direction question. Partisanship is more of a behavioral concept, which is measured combining the direction and intensity questions. Following the lead of other affective polarization scholars, I include leaners in my measures of affective polarization primarily to maintain a large enough N of young people for analysis.

Figure 3.1: Average Group Thermometer Ratings



Note: Yellow diamonds indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better.

Table 3.2: Average Group Thermometer Ratings

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
Dem Young	58.7	62.4	62.9	61.5	61.5	59.3	64.1
Dem Older	59.9	62.9	63.7	67.2	62.8	59.3	62.1
Rep Young	56.5	57.1	62.8	64.3	60.3	57.5	57.6
Rep Older	55.5	57.9	60.1	65.6	58.5	57.5	57.6

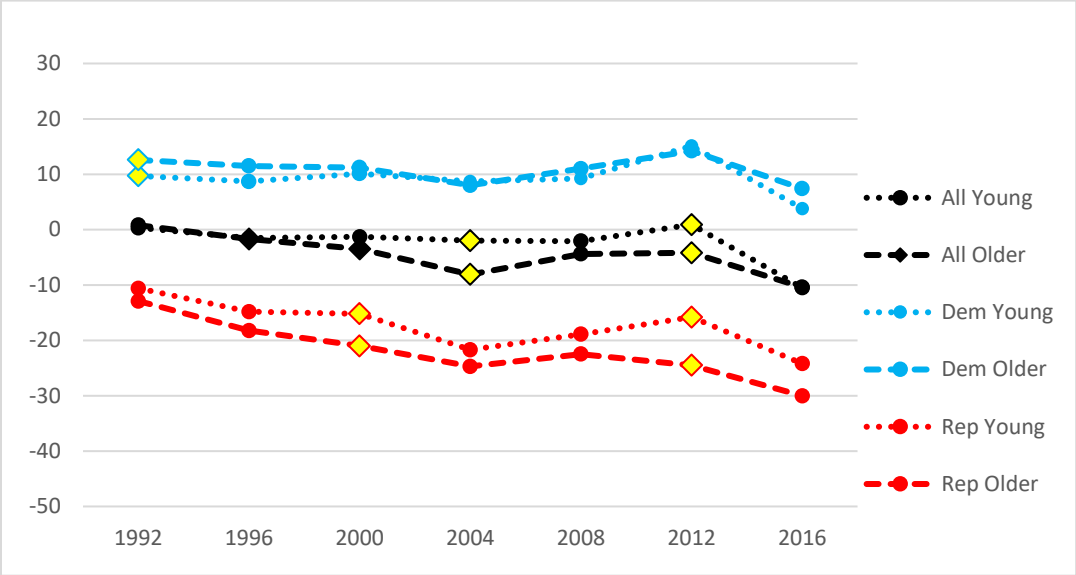
Note: Cells highlighted in yellow indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better.

which was both a statistically significant and substantive difference that year. This is indicative that the normal pattern of opinions was disrupted that year, particularly among young Democrats. While it is interesting this occurred the same year we first observe the age gap in vote choice, a statistically significant difference in a group thermometer averages is hardly conclusive. But the positivity bias suggested by previous scholars (e.g. Knight 1984) is apparent in that all average group thermometer ratings lie above the neutral point of 50 for both age groups of both parties for all years under study, validating the need to adjust the scales for each party and candidate thermometer. As mentioned above, each ANES respondent's thermometer ratings were adjusted by subtracting their personal

average group score from each of their individual party and candidate thermometers ratings, setting a new neutral point for each respondent at zero.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY ASSESSMENTS

Figure 3.2: Democratic Party Thermometer Ratings



Note: Yellow diamonds indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better.

Table 3.3: Pre-Election Adjusted Democratic Party Ratings

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
All Young	0.3	-1.5	-1.3	-2	-2.1	0.9	-10.5
All Older	0.8	-1.7	-3.5	-8.1	-4.4	-4.2	-10.4
Dem Young	9.7	8.7	10.1	8.7	9.2	15.1	3.8
Dem Older	12.6	11.5	11.2	8	11	14.2	7.4
Rep Young	-10.6	-14.8	-15.2	-21.7	-18.9	-15.8	-24.2
Rep Older	-12.9	-18.2	-21	-24.7	-22.5	-24.5	-30

Note: Cells highlighted in yellow indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better.

Next, looking at the average adjusted thermometer ratings between all young and all older respondents towards the Democratic Party regardless of partisanship (the black lines in Figure 3.2 and Table 3.3), we see a six-point divergence between the age groups in

2004 when the attitudes among older Americans grew cooler towards the Democrats but the average attitudes of young Americans remain fairly consistent from 2000. A difference of means test indicates this gap was statistically significant at the $p<.05$ level. Attitudes between young and older Americans also diverged at a statistically-significant level in 2012, resulting in a difference of just over 5 points. Overall, it seems that young people hold warmer affective feelings towards the Democratic Party than older individuals when partisanship is not taken into account. But even more interesting nuances appear when respondents are disaggregated by partisanship.

Consistent with the findings of affective polarization scholars, the attitudes of Democrats (designated by blue lines) towards their own party have remained fairly consistent[16] over time while Republicans' attitudes (designated by red lines) towards the outparty have been growing cooler in recent election years. This trend is pronounced among older Republicans, whose average adjusted thermometer ratings dropped from a high of -12.9 in 1992 to a low of -30 in 2012— a decrease of 17.1 points in the span of twenty years. In fact, the difference in attitudes between all older and all younger respondents in 2012 appears to be largely driven by the divergence in attitudes between older and younger Republicans, where the attitudes of older Republicans towards the Democratic Party dropped slightly from 2008 while the average ratings of younger Republicans actually rose between 2008 and 2012, resulting in a 9-point difference between the age groups.

In fact, average assessments of the Democratic Party among young Republicans were consistently warmer than those for older Republicans in all years under study. The substantive differences between young and older Republicans ranged in magnitude, from

[16] Though there is a drop between 2012 and 2016.

a 2.3-point difference in 1992 to an 8.7-point disparity in 2012, though the differences between the two age groups only reach statistical significance in 2000 and 2012. These findings suggest that the weaker and more malleable partisan attachments of young people generate less outparty animosity than for older partisans, whose party identifications have theoretically crystallized with age. This also lends support to H4—that affective polarization affects older partisans to a greater extent than younger partisans, at least among Republican identifiers and leaners.

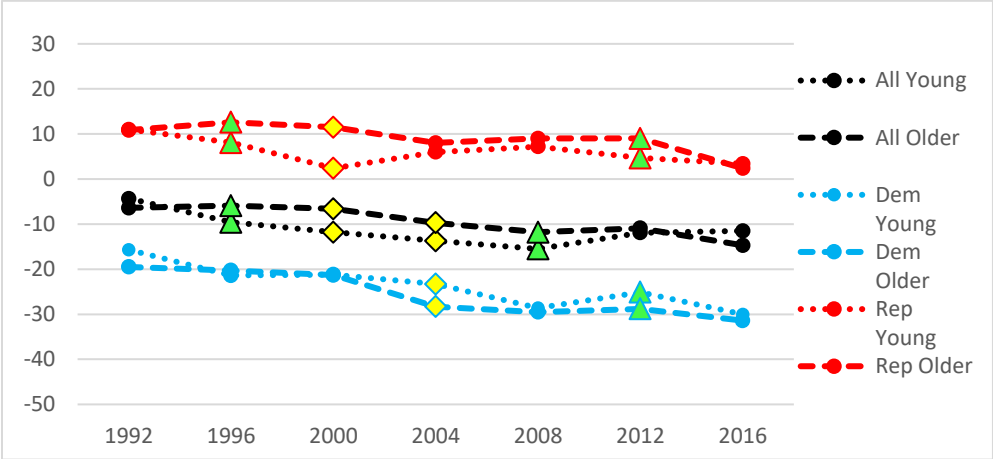
Democratic identifiers and leaners of all ages are much warmer towards the Democratic Party than are Republicans, as we should expect. However, the substantive differences between young and older Democrats were minimal. Young Democrats did not hold warmer feelings towards their party than older Democrats, giving us reason to reject H2. In fact, the only statistically significant difference between young and older Democrats in any year was 1992, when the average adjusted thermometer score for young Democrats was 3.1 points cooler than for older individuals. Thermometer ratings for both age groups reached their nadir in 2016 when young Democrats had an average adjusted thermometer rating of 3.8 and older Democrats an average of 7.4 points, while both age groups reached their highest levels in 2012 with average thermometer ratings of 15.1 and 14.2, respectively.

REPUBLICAN PARTY ASSESSMENTS

Figure 3.3 and Table 3.4 present the results for Republican Party thermometer assessments. As one would expect, Republican identifiers and leaners of all ages are much warmer towards the Republican Party than Democrats are for all years under study. Consistent with the findings of affective polarization scholars, the attitudes of Democratic identifiers and leaners towards the outparty have grown consistently cooler over the

twenty-four-year period under investigation. Democratic youth are not as cool towards the Republican Party as older Democrats for most years under study, to the point where there is a statistically significant divergence in the means in 2004 ($p<.05$) and 2012 ($p<.1$), though these differences are not as substantively large (5 and 3.7 points, respectively) as those we see between young and older Republicans towards the Democrats presented above.

Figure 3.3: Republican Party Thermometer Ratings



Note: Yellow diamonds indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better. Green triangles indicate a statistically significant difference in means at the p<.1 level.

Table 3.4: Pre-Election Adjusted Republican Thermometer Ratings

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
All Young	-4.3	-9.6	-11.8	-13.7	-15.5	-11.9	-11.5
All Older	-6.4	-5.9	-6.6	-9.7	-11.8	-10.9	-14.7
Dem Young	-15.7	-21.4	-21.2	-23.3	-28.6	-25.1	-30
Dem Older	-19.5	-20.3	-21.3	-28.3	-29.5	-28.8	-31.4
Rep Young	11	8.1	2.4	6	7.2	4.69	3.4
Rep Older	10.9	12.6	11.5	8	9	9	2.4

Note: Cells highlighted in yellow indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better. Cells highlighted in green indicate a statistically significant difference at the p<.1 level.

Interestingly, like the case with young Republicans, these results suggest young Democrats are less antagonistic towards the outparty than older Democrats which again provides evidence to support H4—affective polarization appears more pronounced among older partisans than younger partisans. Furthermore, the fact that there is less animosity among young Democrats towards the Republican Party also suggests that the Democratic advantage among young people at the voting booth is probably not driven primarily by the attitudes of young Democrats.

Assessments of Republican attitudes towards their own party are far more interesting. Young Republicans were consistently cooler towards their own party than older Republicans for all years under study until 2016. While the differences were substantively small (<2 points) most years, there are statistically significant differences at the $p<.1$ level in 1996 (a 4.5-point difference) and 2012 (a 4.3 difference), and a statistically significant ($p<.05$) and rather large 9.1-point difference in 2000. In 2016, however, the average adjusted thermometer score for young Republicans was about one-point higher than for older Republicans. Nonetheless, this is strikingly different from what we observe between young and older Democrats towards their own party during the same period, where young and older Democratic inparty ratings were on par with each other. So there appear to be two simultaneous forces at work where young Republicans were cooler towards their own party from 1992 through 2012 while at the same time consistently demonstrating warmer feelings towards the Democrats than older Republicans. This confirms H3—that young Republican identifiers and leaners are less affectively attached to the Republican Party than older Republicans.

Substantive differences in thermometer ratings exist when comparing the results of Tables 3.3 and 3.4. The lower outparty means for Democrats, both older and younger, suggest they hold more negative feelings towards the Republican Party than Republicans

hold towards the Democratic Party. From 2004 on, the average outparty ratings among older Democrats hovered between -28 and -30 points, while older Republicans outparty ratings of Democrats did not dip below -25 until 2016. Similarly, the lowest average outparty rating for young Republicans came in 2016 when the mean dropped to -24.2, while the floor for young Democrats' outparty ratings was -30 that same year.

Average thermometer ratings among all young people regardless of partisanship (black dotted line in Figure 3.2) hovered near zero for the Democratic Party for most of the time period under study, ranging from a high of .9 in 2012 to a low of -10.5 in 2016. But average thermometer ratings among all young people were much lower for the Republican Party (black dotted line in Figure 3.3), ranging from a high of -4.3 in 1992 to a low of -15.5 in 2008. While young people generally held warmer feelings for the Democratic Party than older adults, average thermometer ratings hovering at or below zero imply that young people are not necessarily attracted to the Democratic Party per se, but are perhaps repelled by the Republican Party to a greater extent than older people.

AFFECTIVE POLARIZATION ASSESSMENTS

Outparty-inparty assessments are the conventional tool used by scholars to measure affective polarization, created by simply subtracting an individual's assessment of his own party from his assessment of the outparty. The more negative the result, the greater the level of affective polarization he holds. Looking first at the differences in average outparty-inparty assessments between partisans of all ages (Figure 3.4, Table 3.5), the increasingly negative polarization scores suggest affective polarization was on the rise from 1992 to 2012, particularly among Democrats. The average polarization scores among Democratic identifiers and leaners dropped non-monotonically over the twenty-year period under examination, from a high of -30.7 to a low of -42.4 in 2012, though they bounced back up

a bit to -37.6 in 2016. Average Republican outparty-inparty scores, on the other hand, dropped from a high of -23.4 in 1992 and have hovered right around the -30 mark ever since. This is consistent with the findings of previous affective polarization studies that find that Democratic outparty ratings have declined more precipitously than Republican assessments of the Democratic Party (e.g. Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012). Disaggregating these assessments by age provides an explanation for why we see such a trend.

Figure 3.4: Outparty-Inparty Polarization Scores

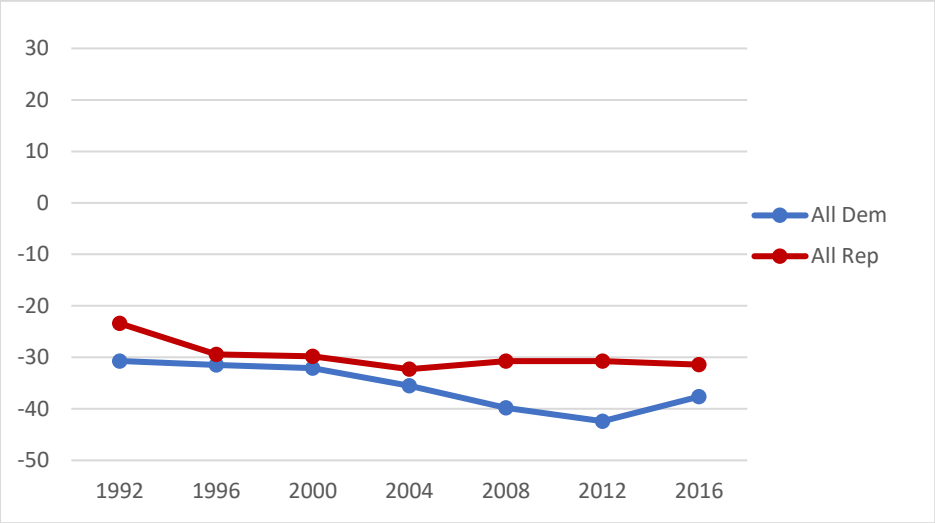
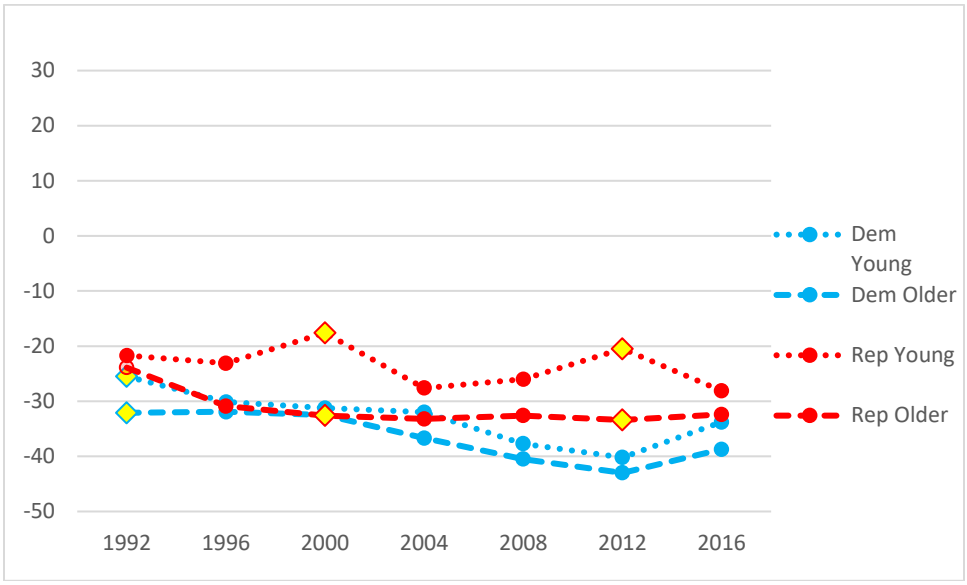


Table 3.5: Pre-Election Outparty-Inparty Adjusted Polarization Scores

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
All Dem	-30.7	-31.5	-32.1	-35.5	-39.8	-42.4	-37.6
All Rep	-23.4	-29.4	-29.8	-32.3	-30.7	-30.7	-31.4

While the trend in polarization scores for young Democrats (Figure 3.5 and Table 3.6) generally mirrors those of older Democrats, young Democrats do not appear to be as affectively polarized as older Democrats. In fact, the magnitude of the difference between young and older Democrats was less than 3 points in most years, though the difference is

Figure 3.5: Outparty-Inparty Polarization Scores by Age



Note: Yellow diamonds indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better.

Table 3.6: Pre-Election Outparty-Inparty Adjusted Polarization Scores by Age

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
Dem Young	-25.5	-30.1	-31.2	-32	-37.7	-40.2	-33.8
Dem Older	-32.1	-31.9	-32.5	-36.7	-40.5	-43	-38.7
Rep Young	-21.7	-23.1	-17.6	-27.6	-26	-20.5	-28.1
Rep Older	-23.9	-30.9	-32.6	-33.2	-32.6	-33.4	-32.4

Note: Cells highlighted in yellow indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better.

only statistically significant in 1992 when there was a substantively large gap of 6.6 points. However, the movement in the outparty-inparty polarization scores among Republican youth varies quite considerably from those of older Republicans. Not only are young Republicans consistently less affectively polarized than older Republicans, there are quite substantive gaps between the age groups in many years and statistically significant differences in some. We see a significant reduction in affective polarization among young Republicans at the end of Bill Clinton's administration in 2000 when young Republicans were much warmer towards the Democratic Party and cooler towards their own party than

older Republicans, resulting in a 15-point difference in average affective polarization scores (Figures 3.2 and 3.3, respectively). We also see less affective polarization among young Republicans compared to older Republicans in 2012 after Barack Obama's first term in office, where there is both a statistically significant and substantively large 12.9-point gap in polarization scores between young and older Republicans. This provides the best evidence to confirm H4—affective polarization appears to affect older partisans of both parties to a greater degree than younger partisans. Consistent with my theory, young people are less emotionally attached to the party they identify with or lean towards and are less antagonistic towards the outparty. This suggests that partisanship should matter more to the vote of older Americans, and is something that I will test further in Chapter 5. In addition, because we observe a significant reduction in affective polarization among Republican youth after periods in which the presidency has been held by the Democrats (and one instance in which we see a reduction of affective polarization among Democratic youth after a Republican president in 1992), differences in polarization scores may be related to opinions of the incumbent president. This warrants the idea that a closer look at thermometer ratings of candidates and incumbents should be performed.

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ASSESSMENTS

An examination of the Democratic presidential candidate thermometer ratings displays some interesting patterns (Figure 3.6 and Table 3.7). First, ignoring partisanship and looking at average thermometer ratings by age group (black lines in figure 3.6), we see that the opinions of young and older Americans were relatively similar from 1992 to 2000. But in 2004, a 10.2-point gap in average thermometer ratings emerges where young Americans hold much more positive feelings towards the Democratic candidate, and this gap persists through 2012 (though it shrinks to 6.5 points). This age gap mirrors the patterns

we see in vote choice, where young Americans are much more favorable towards the Democratic presidential candidate than older Americans from 2004 through 2012. While young people were not altogether favorable towards John Kerry in 2004 (given that the average is below 0), his average thermometer rating among 18-29-year-olds was still much warmer than the average for older individuals. However, the age gap in affect towards the Democratic candidate reverses itself in 2016, when Hillary Clinton's average adjusted thermometer score was about eight points lower for 18-29-year-olds than among older Americans.

Figure 3.6: Democratic Presidential Candidate Thermometer Ratings

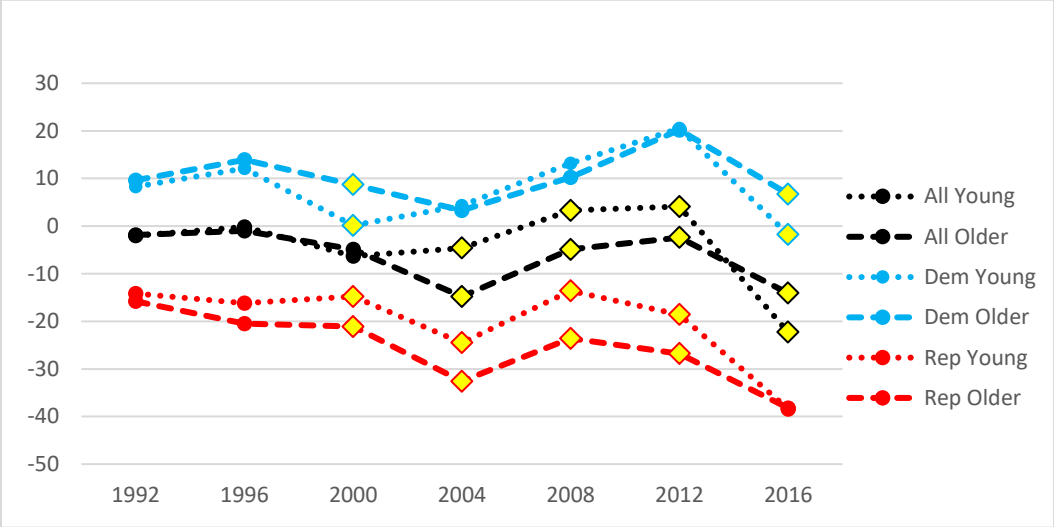


Table 3.7: Pre-Election Democratic Presidential Candidate Thermometer Ratings

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
All Young	-2	-0.2	-6.3	-4.6	3.3	4.1	-22.3
All Older	-1.9	-1	-4.9	-14.8	-4.9	-2.4	-14.1
Dem Young	8.3	12.1	0.13	4.3	13.2	20.5	-1.8
Dem Older	9.6	13.9	8.7	3.3	10.2	20.2	6.7
Rep Young	-14.2	-16.2	-14.8	-24.5	-13.6	-18.6	-38.4
Rep Older	-15.8	-20.5	-21.1	-32.6	-23.6	-26.8	-38.2

Note: Cells highlighted in yellow indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better.

When disaggregating by party, affect towards the Democratic presidential candidate was similar for both young and older Democrats (blue lines in Figure 3.6) for all election years except 2000 and 2016, when young Democratic identifiers and leaners were much cooler towards Al Gore (8.6 points) and Hillary Clinton (8.5 points) than older Democrats were, respectively (differences are statistically significant at the $p<.05$ level). In 2000, the average for older Democrats was over eight points higher than the average for younger Democrats, which hovered just above zero that year. The statistically significant age gap between all young and older Americans in 2016 appears to stem largely from the disparate opinions between young and older Democrats towards Hillary Clinton.

The age gap in affect towards the Democratic presidential candidates between all young and older American in 2004, 2008, and 2012 seem to be rooted in the dissimilar opinions between young and older Republicans. From 2004 to 2012, young Republican identifiers and leaners statistically diverged ($p<.05$) from older Republicans between six and ten points, rating the Democratic presidential candidate more warmly each election year than their older counterparts.17 Thus, there is limited support for H5—while young Democratic identifiers and leaners did not hold warmer feelings towards Democratic candidates than older Democrats from 2004 through 2012, young Republicans held less cool feelings towards the Democratic candidates than older Republicans did those years.

[17] While there is a statistically significant difference in opinions between young and older Republicans in 2000 as well, this cancels out the statistically significant gap between young and older Democrats that year.

Figure 3.7: Republican Presidential Candidate Thermometer Ratings

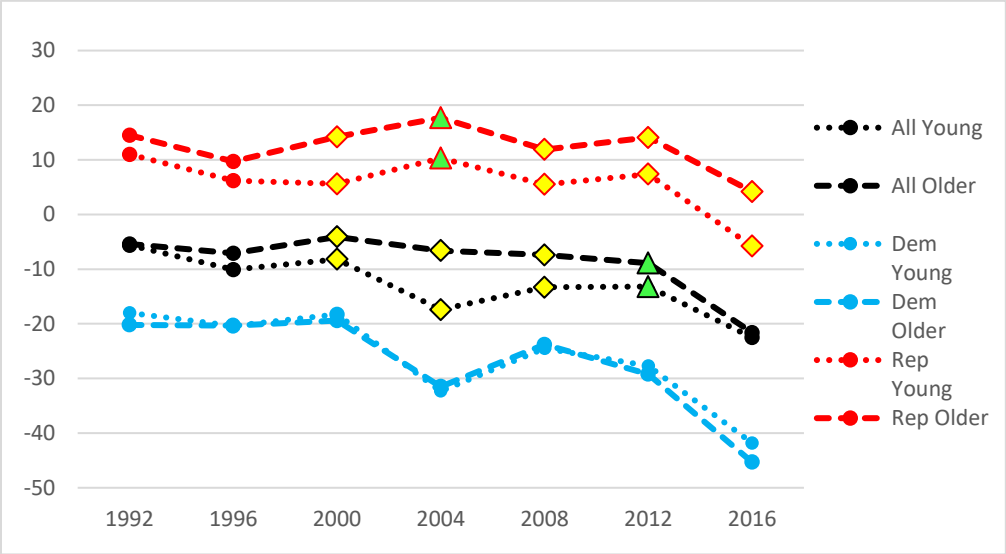


Table 3.8: Pre-Election Republican Presidential Candidate Thermometer Ratings

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
All Young	-5.6	-10.1	-8.2	-17.4	-13.3	-13.2	-22.5
All Older	-5.4	-7.1	-4.1	-6.6	-7.4	-8.9	-21.6
Dem Young	-18	-20.4	-18.3	-32.3	-24.5	-27.7	-41.8
Dem Older	-20.2	-20.3	-19.4	-31.5	-23.8	-29.2	-45.3
Rep Young	11	6.2	5.6	10.3	5.5	7.37	-5.8
Rep Older	14.5	9.7	14.2	17.7	11.9	14.1	4.2

Note: Cells highlighted in yellow indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better. Cells highlighted in green indicate a statistically significant difference at the p<.1 level.

Looking next at the Republican presidential candidate thermometers (Figure 3.7 and Table 3.8), we see a pattern similar to that in the Democratic presidential candidate thermometers. First, ignoring partisanship, there is a statistically significant divergence in attitudes between all young and older Americans from 2000 to 2012 (black lines in Figure 3.7), where young people rate the Republican presidential candidates more coolly than older Americans.[18] In fact, the bottom really seems to fall out under Bush from 2000 to

[18] This difference is statistically significant at the p<.05 level for all years from 2000 to 2016 except 2012, where the difference is statistically significant at the p<.1 level.

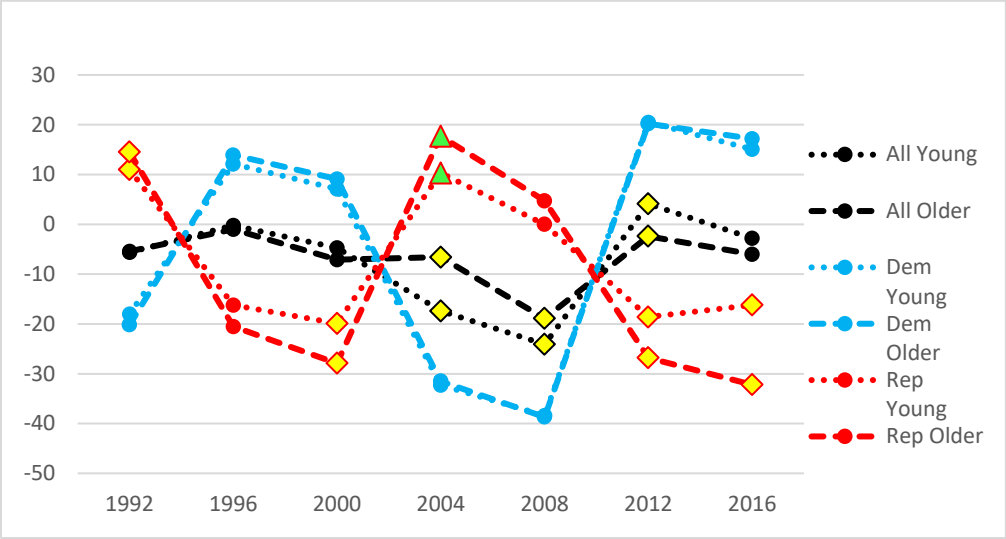
2004 among young people—he was the same Republican candidate both years, but his average thermometer rating was much lower in 2004 among the young, and was 10.8 points lower than the mean for older Americans that year. Given that his partisanship was the same and his personal qualities were the same, this suggests that other short-term forces were at work and the drop was perhaps issue- and/or performance-based. Disaggregating by partisanship, we see that there are no real substantive nor statistically significant differences of note between young and older Democrats (blue lines in Figure 3.7) in their attitudes towards the Republican candidate for any year between 1992 and 2016.

Once again, though, we see considerable differences in the attitudes between young and older Republican identifiers and leaners, and this time towards Republican presidential candidates (red lines in Figure 3.7). From 2000 through 2016, there were statistically significant and quite substantive (7- to 9-point) differences where young Republicans were not as warm towards their candidates as older Republicans. In fact, young Republicans even provided Donald Trump with a negative average thermometer score in 2016. This provides limited support for H6. Young Republicans do hold cooler feelings towards Republican candidates than older Republicans, but young Democrats do not hold cooler feelings towards the Republican candidates than older Democrats.

INCUMBENT PRESIDENT ASSESSMENTS

When examining the thermometer ratings of incumbent presidents for each year under examination (Figure 3.8 and Table 3.9), some general patterns emerge. It appears that differences in outparty-inparty assessments between young and older partisans are at least correlated with assessments of the incumbent president. Correlation, of course, does not suggest causation. But it is curious that there is a statistically significant gap in incumbent thermometer ratings between all young and all older Americans from 2004 to

Figure 3.8: Incumbent Presidential Thermometer Ratings



Note: Yellow diamonds indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better. Green triangles indicate a statistically significant difference in means at the p<.1 level.

Table 3.9: Pre-Election Incumbent President Thermometer Ratings

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
All Young	-5.6	-0.2	-4.7	-17.4	-24.1	4.1	-2.8
All Older	-5.4	-1	-7.1	-6.6	-18.9	-2.4	-6
Dem Young	-18	12.1	7.1	-32.3	-38.4	20.5	15.1
Dem Older	-20.2	13.9	9.1	-31.5	-38.7	20.2	17.2
Rep Young	11	-16.2	-19.9	10.3	0	-18.6	-16.2
Rep Older	14.5	-20.5	-27.9	17.7	4.7	-26.8	-32.2

Note: Cells highlighted in yellow indicate a statistically significant difference in means between young and older respondents at the p<.05 level or better. Cells highlighted in green indicate a statistically significant difference at the p<.1 level.

2012 (black lines in Figure 3.8)—the years in which we also observe the age gap in vote choice. Young voters in 2004 were over ten points cooler towards Bush than older voters were, and this was the same year that young Americans preferred Democrat John Kerry at a much higher rate than older individuals.

In 2008, the average adjusted thermometer ratings for all young people dropped almost seven points lower from their 2004 levels to -24.1. The gap in opinion between young and older Americans actually shrank a bit this year, primarily due to the nine-point

drop in average attitudes of older people to -18.9. Once again, young Americans viewed Bush more coolly than older Americans did that year. While the age gap in attitudes towards the incumbent remained in 2012, this is due to the fact that 18-29-year-olds viewed Barack Obama much more favorably after his first term than older individuals did. In fact, the average adjusted thermometer ratings for young Americans remained positive at 4.1 points that year, while the average for older Americans was -2.4.

Unsurprisingly, in years during which a Republican is president, thermometer ratings for the incumbent among Republican respondents of all ages spike, then plummet during Democratic presidencies. The reverse is true for Democrats. Disaggregating by age and partisanship, average thermometer ratings among young and older Democrats mirror each other quite precisely for all years under study (blue lines in figure 3.8). Where we see a divergence in attitudes is, once again, between young and older Republicans (red lines in Figure 3.8). While thermometer ratings among both young and older Republicans dropped at the end of Bill Clinton's second term, there is a statistically significant ($p<.05$) difference in thermometer ratings in 2000, where incumbent president ratings for Bill Clinton among Republican youth were not as cool as those for older Republicans. Similarly, while incumbent ratings among all Republicans dropped between 2008 and 2012 in the switch in incumbency from George W. Bush to Barack Obama, the thermometer assessments for Obama among older Republicans dropped much more steeply than for younger Republicans, resulting in a statistically significant gap between the two groups. This gap between older and younger Republicans in assessments of Obama persisted into the 2016 election. This lends limited support for H7—young partisans do seem to be affected by incumbent performance in office to a greater degree than older partisans, but this effect seems to be limited to Republican identifiers and leaners. But when taking partisanship out

of the equation, assessments of George W. Bush were much lower among young Americans in 2004 and 2008 than among older adults.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Scholars have noted that average Republican outparty ratings of the Democrats have not declined as quickly as Democratic outparty ratings of the Republicans over the last few decades (Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Levendusky 2013). The analysis above not only confirms these findings, but also uncovers at least one partial explanation for why this is the case. Affective polarization—in terms of positive or negative feelings towards the parties— is not as pronounced among young Americans as it is among older Americans. This is likely due to the relative newness of young people to politics and government, whose party affiliations have yet to solidify into lifelong predispositions. But this appears to be particularly true among young Republican identifiers and leaners, whose average assessments of the Democratic Party and Democratic presidential candidates have not been as cool as the assessments of older Republicans.

These findings also demonstrate that attitudes towards the Democratic Party among young Democrats have been no more positive than the attitudes of older Democrats over the last twenty years. Attitudes of young Republicans towards the Democratic Party were only statistically-significantly different from older Republicans in 2000 and 2012. When looking at the combined attitudes of all young Americans, despite partisanship, we do see statistically significant differences in 2004 and 2012—two years of the three in which we have observed an age gap in vote choice. However, when looking at the average Democratic Party thermometer scores, it is only in 1992 and 2012 that the average for young people is above zero. This is indicative that young people are not attracted to the

Democratic Party per se. Rather, Republican youth are not as affectively attached to their party as older Republicans.

In addition, while the average thermometer score for Democratic candidate John Kerry in 2004 was below the neutral point of zero in 2004, the floor really appeared to fall out from under George W. Bush that year when his thermometer rating among young adults plummeted to -17.4. Evaluations of Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012 were not far above zero both years, but were considerably warmer than the -13.3 and -13.2 averages Republicans John McCain and Mitt Romney earned respectively. These findings demonstrate that the attitudes of young voters towards the parties and their candidates do differ from those of older voters, sometimes quite considerably, and that a closer look at what causes these differences in attitudes is warranted.

More importantly, however, these findings demonstrate that affective polarization affects older partisans to a greater degree than younger partisans, confirming part of my theory that party factors have a greater effect on the attitudes of older Americans relative to younger Americans. It does not appear that younger voters were casting their ballots for the Democrats to a greater degree from 2004 to 2012 because of stronger emotional responses to the parties or their candidates, or at least to a degree that would explain the increased Democratic vote share among this age group. So the age gap in vote choice is not explained by the emotionalism of the young.

What these data do suggest that retrospective assessments of the incumbent president's time in office and performance of the government during his administration may affect young voters in a more extreme manner than older voters. The pro-Democratic voting tendencies of the young may be narrowly-based. They may only be as deep as the issue context and/or other contextual factors that existed in the 2004-2012 time frame. This idea will be explored further in Chapters 4 and 5.

As such, in Chapter 4 I turn to the idea of substantive polarization and issue preferences as factors that may explain the age gap in vote choice. Some scholars argue that it is hard to see polarization when looking at ideology and issue preferences because these are hard-to-grasp ideas with a bias towards moderation, so less-knowledgeable individuals tend to place themselves in the middle of survey response scales (Palfrey and Poole 1987). Yet the partisan and ideological sorting of elites in Washington over the last few decades has made it easier than ever to distinguish between the general policy stances of the parties, leading to clearer candidate choices for voters even if voters are unaware of the specific policy desires of a candidate or party (e.g. Fiorina et al. 2005). Thus, issue preferences, one of the short-term factors affecting vote choice, will be explored more thoroughly in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Substantive Polarization and Issue Proximities

In the previous chapter, I investigated the role of partisanship and affective polarization as a possible explanation for the age gap in vote choice from 2004-2012. The results of Chapter 3 suggest party identification and affect are not driving young voters towards the Democratic Party and its candidates; if anything, they suggest that young people today are less attached to both major parties than older partisans, and this is especially pronounced among young Republicans. This is consistent with my theory that young people are less attached to the parties than older individuals. Now that I have established that their attitudes and emotions towards the parties and candidates are different from the older electorate, I move to my next causal claim—that the short-term factors affecting vote choice differentially impact young people relative to older Americans, especially in times of political turbulence. In this chapter, I examine the effects of prospective issue preferences and proximities on candidate choice for both young people and the older electorate.

As noted in Chapter 3, political elites have polarized in recent decades on matters of public policy including economic, social, and foreign policy issues. At the same time, survey data suggest young people have become more dovish on defense and more liberal on social issues in recent years when compared to the older electorate (e.g. Keeter, Horowitz, and Tyson 2008; Kohut 2008). Because of this, the strong preference for Democratic candidates among 18-29-year-olds may be due, at least in part, to the issue positions held by the party and its candidates aligning more closely to their own than the positions held by Republicans. In fact, the toxic stew in which the Republican Party was mired after the turn of the 21st century may have encouraged young people to drift further to the left in reaction to the perceived movement of the Republican Party to the right during

the George W. Bush administration, particularly on foreign policy and social issues. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to determine whether, in the aggregate, young people have moved to the left on issue positions, see a difference between the candidates on issues, and whether they are using those issue preferences when making their decisions at the ballot box.

ISSUE POSITIONS AND THE SPATIAL THEORY OF VOTING

As mentioned in Chapters 2 and 3, because party identification is generally a durable attachment, it is a strong and consistent predictor of vote choice and can drive issue preferences. However, studies have found that party loyalties may change in response to an individual's policy preferences, particularly on the polarizing issues associated with periods of partisan change (Abramowitz and Saunders 1998; Alvarez and Bedolla 2008; Carsey and Layman 2006). This is especially true for young Americans since their relatively malleable attitudes are susceptible to the strong information flows present in political campaigns (Zaller 1992), allowing for important political socialization opportunities and possibly causing their less-crystallized party loyalties to shift ((Jennings and Niemi 1981; Sears and Valentino 1997). But many young people have little exposure to everyday political events, and politics may be low-visibility even in presidential election years if the issues of a campaign are rather low in salience. As a result, young people may not pay enough attention to politics for issues to have a strong impact on their attitudes and behavior unless large exogenous events—like war or recession— make politics relevant to them.

While policy attitudes and partisanship may endogenously affect each other, policy preferences can also have an independent effect on vote choice. The central assumption of proximity voting is that a citizen will cast her vote for the candidate whose policy positions

are closest to her own views in a given election (Downs 1957). In fact, several studies indicate voters judge the policy positions of candidates and support the candidate whose policy preferences most closely match their own on the salient issues of a campaign (Alvarez and Nagler 1998; Hillygus and Shields 2008; Jessee 2009). However, Americans are generally poorly informed about politics (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), leading some scholars to argue that most voters are unable to (accurately) vote based on prospective policy preferences (Converse 1964; Popkin 1991). Young Americans may be particularly uninformed about the issue preferences of candidates since politics is not very relevant to their lives at this point in the life cycle, and spatial voting may only occur among older and more sophisticated voters who have more experience with the parties and their candidates.

Yet it may not be necessary for young voters to know the exact policy positions of a candidate to know that Democratic candidates generally hold liberal positions on social and economic issues while Republican are on the conservative side of the spectrum. In fact, the ideological polarization of party elites in recent decades makes it much easier for voters to distinguish between the parties and their candidates on matters of policy (Abramowitz 2010). Retrospective assessments of incumbent performance in office can also clue voters in on the parties' and candidates' prospective stances on certain issues (Fiorina 1981; Fiorina et al. 2005). Thus, even if young people are reluctant to identify with the parties, they can still use the candidates' party labels as heuristics for issue positions.

Given my theory that young people are particularly susceptible to the short-term factors influencing the vote including issue preferences, particularly in times of relative political turmoil, I investigate four hypotheses in Chapter 4. If the masses are truly polarizing on substantive policy issues like some scholars suggest (e.g. Abramowitz 2010), my first hypothesis (H1) is that, in the aggregate, young people generally hold more liberal positions on social issues, foreign policy issues, and economic issues than older people and

that over time, in the aggregate, these issue preferences have moved further to the left. If this hypothesis holds, it could help explain the pro-Democratic voting tendencies of the young that led to the age gap in vote choice we saw from 2004 to 2012 since Democratic candidates generally hold more liberal positions on issues.

Of course, it might be the case that young people have always been liberal and that the strong preference for Democratic candidates among 18-29-year-olds in recent elections is due to the growing ideological polarization of candidates. Indeed, a necessary condition for a policy attitude to impact vote choice is that a citizen sees a difference in the candidates' stands on that issue (Fournier et al. 2003). Because of the turbulent political climate from 2004 to 2012, it is plausible that young people were more aware of the candidates stands on the important issues of the day and were acting on those policy preferences to a greater degree than before. Thus, my second hypothesis (H2), which is not necessarily exclusive to H1, is that young people were better able to distinguish between the candidates' positions on matters of public policy from 2004 to 2012 than in years prior to 2004. If this hypothesis rings true, we should see the candidates' perceived positions on these issues become more extreme in recent presidential elections.

In addition, because of the turbulent political climate from 2004 to 2012, it is plausible that young people were more aware of the candidates stands on the important issues of the day and were acting on those policy preferences to a greater degree than before. Regardless of whether either or both of the first two hypotheses hold, my third hypothesis (H3) is that young people are proximally closer to Democratic candidates on the important issues in recent elections—particularly on foreign policy and economic issues—and that they are using those issue proximities when choosing their preferred candidate.

Finally, there were few very salient issues on the national agenda during the 1996 and 2000 elections, and studies suggest that issues did not have a strong impact on vote choice in those election years (Alvarez and Nagler 1998; Miller and Klobucar 2003). Given their lack of political engagement during times of relative political blandness, this should be particularly true among young voters. As such, my fourth hypothesis (H4) is that young people used issue preferences to a greater extent during the period from 2004 to 2012 than in earlier election years when making their candidate preference decisions because politics and issues were not as salient in prior years. If this hypothesis holds, we should either see a few issues—namely foreign policy and economic issues— having a much stronger effect from 2004 to 2012 relative to earlier elections, holding all other variables at their means, or a larger number of issues affecting the vote choice of young people in the period from 2004 to 2012 compared to earlier elections.

DATA AND DESIGN

To test my hypotheses, I use pre-election American National Election Studies Time Series data from 1996 to 2016 to obtain comparable measures of citizens' policy views and perceived presidential candidate policy positions. The virtue of the ANES is its commitment to asking certain issue questions in the same way each election year (with some exceptions, as noted below), allowing for comparability and an examination of trends over time. However, it is also limited in the respect that the issue questions asked may not exactly match the political context in a particular election year. For example, one of the issue questions asks about levels of defense spending but not specifically the "Iraq War" (though, as discussed below, defense spending actually works as a fairly good proxy for the war). Another vice is that the ANES does not always include all of the same issue questions in each year's Time Series Survey, or will sometimes only ask for the

respondent's position on an issue but not where the candidates stand. This becomes particularly problematic on the Time Series Surveys prior to 1996; as such, I only extend these analyses back to 1996.

Model 1

I first examine the aggregate mean scores for self-placement, Democratic candidate placement, and Republican candidate placement on a number of ANES issue scales to determine if there has been aggregate movement in opinion among young people on these issues, and whether there has been aggregate movement in perceived candidate positions on those issues. I then create proximity models based on the spatial theory of voting, which assume each voter's policy preference can be represented by a point in space on a single issue, and the policy position of each candidate on that issue can be represented by a point in the same space. Rational voters are assumed to select the candidate whose policy positions are closer to their own. Because political information levels among the youth are notoriously low (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), young Americans may need to rely on general impressions of where a candidate's position is rather than the actual position a candidate holds. Thus, in Model 1, what matters is where the survey respondents *perceive* the candidates' positions to be in relation to their own positions on issues rather than using an objective measure of a candidate's position. I compare each citizen's own policy position to their perceived candidate positions on each issue scale to determine whether individuals used issue proximities when making their candidate preference decisions. I split the sample by age, running the analyses first for 18-29-year-olds and then for all citizens over the age of 30.

I use candidate preference as my dependent variable rather than actual vote choice since voter turnout among 18-29-year-olds is low, due to a variety of factors. Voting is a

habit that takes a few election cycles to develop and, due to their newness to politics and the voting process, young people are less likely to have formed this habit (Plutzer 2002). Young citizens also face greater institutional barriers to voting than older Americans such as their higher rates of residential mobility and the necessity to re-register to vote each time they move (Niemi and Weisberg 2001). In addition, there are a multitude of other reasons an individual might not vote in an election year, yet they may hold real preference as to who wins the presidency. Because of this, I extend my analysis to include young nonvoters to see if these issue preferences exist among them as well, and whether these issue preferences are predictive of candidate support.

The ANES uses a seven-point issue position scale for the following issues: government spending and services, defense spending, national health insurance, government job guarantees, aid to blacks, and environmental policy/jobs (see Appendix A for question wording). These issues were chosen because they were asked fairly consistently from 1996 to 2016, with a few exceptions noted below.

The independent variables for issue proximities in my first model were created as follows:

$$CP_{ij} = |R_{ij} - \lambda_{ijR}| - |R_{ij} - \lambda_{ijD}| \text{ for } j = 1 \ldots 6$$

where candidate proximity (CP_i) for issue j is determined by the absolute value of the difference between a respondent's (R_i) position on issue j from his perception of the Republican candidate's position on that same issue (λ_{iR}), minus the absolute value of the difference between the respondent's position on the issue and his perception of the Democratic candidate's position on the issue (λ_{iD}). $|R_{ij} - \lambda_{ijR}|$ and $|R_{ij} - \lambda_{ijD}|$ can each take values between 0 and 6, so CP_{ij} can take values between -6 and +6. A negative value for CP_{ij} indicates that the respondent's position on the issue is closer to his perceptions of

where the Republican candidate stood on that issue, while positive values indicate a position closer to that of the Democratic candidate. A value of 0 indicates that an individual perceives himself to be equidistant from both candidates on a given issue. Values closer to the extremes of -6 or +6 suggest a respondent not only sees stark differences between the candidates, but also that his preferences match closely with one of the candidates.

I use probit regression to estimate my models, controlling for a variety of social attributes thought to be important in guiding voting decisions including gender, race, partisanship, and union membership. These demographic controls are important because such groups historically vote for Democratic candidates. A dummy variable for self-identified born-again Christians and evangelical voters was added as well, as this group has moved solidly within the Republican coalition in recent years (Fiorina 2005). Additionally, I include partisanship in my model as a control since party identification is generally the most reliable predictor of candidate preference. My dependent variable is candidate preference, a binary variable where 0 is a preference for the Republican candidate and 1 indicates preference for the Democratic candidate.

ISSUES AND EXPECTATIONS

Some of the issue scales used in this analysis may be more relevant for young people than for older voters depending on the political context in a presidential election year. Young voters have been found to be more racially tolerant, more supportive of an activist government, more anti-war, and more "liberal" in general than older citizens in recent years (Kohut 2008). Young voters also favor an expanded role for government in creating social programs (Keeter, Horowitz, and Tyson 2008), and such views may be particularly salient given that the economic recession in 2008 made it difficult for young people to find jobs for many years. For these reasons, on economic issues, I expect that

young people would favor increasing government spending and services and government job guarantees – especially in 2008 and 2012 during the recession.

When it comes to the tradeoff between protecting the environment and maintaining jobs and our standard of living, the expectations are a little less clear. Given the Democratic Party's refocused efforts to address climate change and the environment after the 2000 election, young people might be proximally closer to the Democratic Party in 2004 when maintaining jobs was not as high a priority. But in 2008, as unemployment rates were rising, self-interest over jobs might prevail over sociotropic concerns about the environment among the young. If it does, we might expect young people to be proximally closer to the Republican candidate that election year.

However, there was a slight change to the question wording in 2012 and 2016 that affects the comparability of these years to previous years on the question of environmental protection as it may significantly impact the self-placement of respondents on this issue. Prior to 2012, the prompt pitted environmental protection against protecting jobs and a standard of living, and read "Some people think it is important to protect the environment even if it costs some jobs or otherwise reduces our standard of living… Other people think that protecting the environment is not as important as maintaining jobs and our standard of living." However, the new wording in 2012 and 2016 read "Some people think the federal government needs to regulate business to protect the environment. They think that efforts to protect the environment will also create jobs... Others think that the federal government should not regulate business to protect the environment. They think this regulation will not do much to help the environment and will cost us jobs." The new version of the question includes the matter of regulating of business, and both sides of the frame include creating or saving jobs. This is something that must be taken into consideration when analyzing the results, as young people are likely to want to both protect the environment and create jobs.

In terms of social issues, Barack Obama took a clear stance on national health insurance in his 2008 campaign and after the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010. Given their preference for an expanded role for government in creating social programs mentioned above, I expect that 18-29-year-olds perceive Obama's views to be closer to their own in both 2008 and 2012. In addition, because of the racial backgrounds of the presidential candidates in 2008 and 2012 and the Democratic Party's historical stance on civil rights, young people might have an impression of where the candidates stand on the Aid to Blacks issue. Given the increase in "liberal" attitudes noted above, young people are expected to be closer to the Democratic Party's candidates on this issue, especially in 2008 and 2012.

On foreign policy issues, studies indicate that attitudes on foreign affairs (here, proxied by defense spending) have a significant effect on electoral choice (Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida 1989; Fiorina 1981). The Iraq War drew more media coverage in 2004 than the issues of the economy and terrorism, and evaluations of Iraq had a larger impact on assessments of Bush's overall presidential performance, particularly among individuals who had less exposure to and paid less attention to political news (Malhotra and Krosnick 2007). In fact, the negative effects of reported local and national casualties on public support for Bush's handling of the Iraq War were much larger among individuals who were inattentive to the news relative to those who were regular news consumers (Althaus, Bramlett, and Gimpel 2012). Personal connections to a war also lead individuals to pay more attention to war as a political issue (Lau, Brown, and Sears 1978). For all these reasons, defense spending should be notably salient from 2004 to 2012 for young people, and candidate proximity on this issue should have a particularly strong effect on candidate preference since young citizens generally held negative assessments of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (Kohut et al. 2012).

PROJECTION AND MODEL 2

When using citizens' perceptions of candidate stances on issues, projection is always cause for concern. Projection might lead individuals to impute their own issue preferences onto their favored candidate (Lenz 2009), especially among voters who do not know much about the candidates' issue preferences. Even if young people engage in projection at higher rates than older adults (and there is no evidence to suggest they do so), it still would not explain how they come to prefer these Democratic candidates at much larger proportions than older folks in the first place since a large-scale shift in partisanship has already largely been ruled out as a cause. But studies have found that projection occurs more often on unimportant issue attitudes because people are unlikely to have paid close attention to candidates' stands, and infer them using their own preferences (Krosnick 1988). However, unimportant issues are also unlikely to impact vote choice. On issues that an individual deems important, though, he or she is more likely to pay attention to differences among candidates or infer difference using party platforms.[19]

There is also little reason to expect projection to be more powerful in the period from 2004 to 2012 than in earlier elections. In fact, the ideological polarization of party elites in recent elections has made it easier for voters to distinguish between candidates and parties on general issue preferences (Abramowitz 2010). Because the likelihood of projection rises under uncertainty, it is more likely to occur on specific issues if the

[19] Despite their relative inexperience with politics, young people do consider some issues more important than others. For example, a March 2004 survey of 18-24 year old college undergraduates conducted by Harvard University's Institute of Politics reveals that the issue area of most concern to a plurality of college students at the time was defense issues (33%), with 21% specifically citing war (Harvard IOP 2004). Also, when asked which was more important when choosing a president—their personal qualities like experience and leadership, or their positions on specific issues—66% stated that their positions on specific issues mattered more while only 28% cited personal qualities. Fifty-seven percent of those who said the candidates' positions on specific issue were more important to their vote choice would have voted for John Kerry had the election been held that day and only 33% for Bush, while 57% of those who though personal qualities mattered more would have voted for Bush to 37% who would have voted for Kerry.

positions of the candidates and parties are indistinct nor not well-known in certain election years (like in 1996 and 2000, arguably). As a result, rates of projection should have diminished in recent elections given the growing distinction in policy preferences between the parties and their candidates.

Nonetheless, in an attempt to avoid issues of projection, I follow Krosnick's (1998) lead and run a second model using sample means to approximate a candidate's true position on an issue. In this second model, the independent variables of interest are created by finding the difference between a respondent's own policy views and the sample means for candidates' perceived issue stances. Because candidates' issue preferences are difficult to measure, the sample means provide relatively objective measures of a candidate's issue position to help avoid possible projection biases.

My second proximity voting model representation, using the sample means for each candidate's position on a single issue, is as follows:

$$CP_{ij} = |R_{ij} - \mu_{jR}| - |R_{ij} - \mu_{jD}| \quad \text{for } j=1\ldots6$$

where candidate proximity is determined by the absolute value of the difference between the respondent's (R_i) position on issue j and the sample average of the Republican candidate's position on that same issue (μ_{jR}), minus the absolute value of the difference between the respondent's position on the issue and the sample average of the Democratic candidate's position on the issue (μ_{jD}). Like in the first model, CP_{ij} can take values between -6 and +6, and a value near 0 indicates that an individual is equidistant from the sample means for both candidates. If projection is indeed occurring, we might see evidence for it if a variable is statistically significant in Model 1 using the subjective perceptions of the

candidates' stances on issue but is statistically insignificant in Model 2 using the more objective measures for candidate issue positions.

In sum, young Americans are expected to hold issue preferences that are proximally closer to the Democratic candidates' positions than those of the Republican candidates in recent elections. Because the 1996 and 2000 elections were rather low-salience compared to more recent presidential elections, I expect that most issues will not have the same impact on candidate preference for those years than from the period from 2004 to 2012.

A Brief Caveat

A few caveats must be noted regarding the 2000 and 2008 ANES survey data. In 2008, the survey was split-sampled with respondents randomly assigned to one of two different formats for the spending and services, healthcare, jobs, environment, and defense spending questions (the old format was used for the aid to blacks question for all respondents). The old format, which was used in most of the other Time Series surveys, used a single question to determine each respondent's own position and their perceived candidate positions on an issue. However, the new format split the issues questions into two separate questions (see Appendix A for the full text of both versions). The first question determines the respondents' and perceived candidates' general positions from a directional perspective, and the follow up question asks the degree to which they support that position.

The most troubling problem with the 2008 Time Series Survey is that, while most of the old and new version questions resemble each other closely, the new 2008 Jobs question is an entirely new question despite the ANES labeling it as a "new" Jobs question. The old version of the question asks the degree to which the respondent feels the government should guarantee a job and good standard of living, or whether it should let people get ahead on their own. The new version of the question does not ask about jobs at

all. Instead, it asks whether respondents and candidates favor or oppose (and to what degree) making it possible for illegal immigrants to become U.S. citizens. Because of the discrepancy in questions, I present the results for just the old versions of these questions in my main analyses. I combine the two formats for these questions into a single variable and present the results for the combined analyses in Appendix A, along with the results for the two different formats in separate models.

In 2000, the ANES was performed both face-to-face and by phone, and the issue questions were asked differently depending on the interview mode. The issue questions asked over the phone were asked on a 5-point scale, while face-to-face respondents were given the traditional 7-point scale questions. The ANES created a summary variable that recoded the 7-point responses into a 5-point response by combining the three middle responses as a single midpoint response (i.e. 3, 4, and 5 responses were coded as 3). Like with the 2008 data, I ran my analyses on both formats individually and on the combined data, but I only present the results from the face-to-face data in my primary analysis to remain consistent with other years. I present the results using the summary variables in Appendix A.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

For most issues in most years under study, both young and older people were better able to place the candidates on the issue scales than they were to place themselves. In fact, many suggested that they "hadn't thought about it" when asked where they would place themselves on an issue scale[20], yet were comfortable with placing the presidential candidates on that same scale. In 2012, for example, 71 percent of young people placed themselves and both candidates on the Government Spending and Services. Another 17

[20] Individuals who reported that they "hadn't thought about it" were recoded to the neutral midpoint of 4 to preserve cases.

percent were able to place both candidates on the Government Spending and Services scale but when asked about their self-placement indicated that they "hadn't thought much about it" and therefore did not place themselves on the scale, while the last 12% were missing at least one candidate placement. Out of 1,410 citizens over the age of 30, 1,320 (85%) were able to place themselves and both candidates on the scale while the last 15% were missing at least one candidate placement or their own self-placement.

Similarly, on the issue of Defense spending, 87 young people in the 2012 sample (20%) placed both candidates on the scale but did not indicate their own preferences on the scale, while 285 (64%) were able to place themselves and both candidates on this scale. It was largely the same case for older individuals, where 190 (12%) did not offer a self-placement score on the defense spending scale but placed both candidates on the scale, while 1,127 (73%) placed themselves and both candidates on the scale. This same general pattern holds true for all issue variables in the 2016, 2012, and 1996 ANES data, and most of the variables in the 2008, 2004, and 2000 data.[21] The considerable proportions of young people who are unwilling to offer self-placement positions on issues while still offering

[21] There were some exceptions to this pattern that should be noted. Self-placement rates were lower and candidate placement rates higher among respondents who received the old versions of the questions in 2008, following the same general pattern as 2012. But the question format for the new version of the issue placement questions were designed to elicit self-placement responses by creating each scale using 2 questions. The first is a directional question, asking which of two alternatives the respondent/candidates prefer (or if they prefer the status quo) (See Appendix A). A follow-up intensity question asks the degree to which they agree with the alternative selected in the directional question. Because the question format breaks down the issues into simpler concepts, there were more survey respondents who offered their own self-placement and fewer who offered candidate placements on the issue scales. Additionally, in 2004, a larger proportion of individuals offered a self-placement than offered candidate placements on the spending and services scale among older Americans, and on the government aid to blacks scale for both age groups. This is also the case for both age groups on the job guarantees, aid to blacks, and environment/jobs tradeoff scales in 2000 as well.

Table 4.1: Average 7-point Scale placement, by Issue and by Year

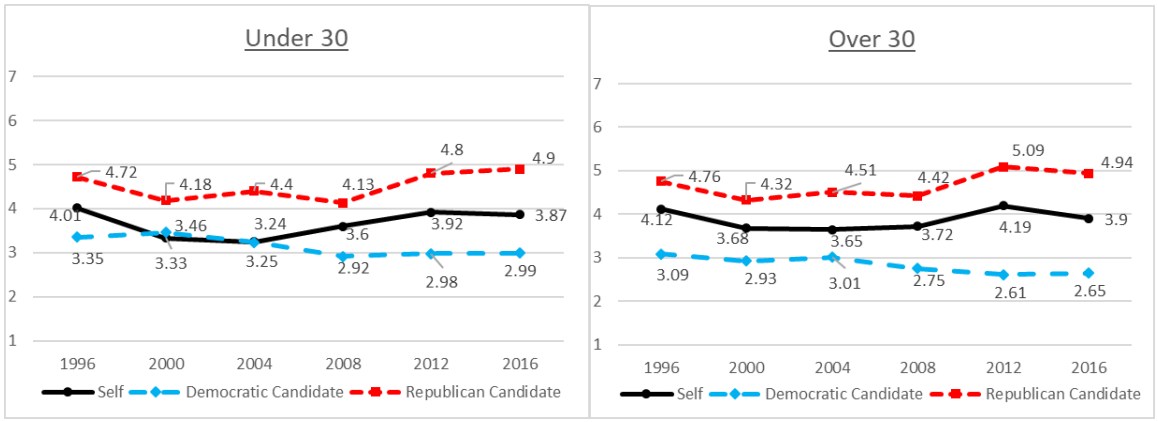
		2016			2012			2008 (old version)			2004			2000 (FTF only)			1996		
		Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep
Spending & Services	Young	3.87	2.99	4.9	3.92	2.98	4.8	3.6	2.92	4.13	3.25	3.24	4.4	3.33	3.46	4.18	4.01	3.35	4.72
	(s.e.)	(.15)	(.14)	(.16)	(.1)	(.1)	(.1)	(.13)	(.11)	(.14)	(.11)	(.1)	(.13)	(.13)	(.13)	(.12)	(.11)	(.11)	(.1)
	Older	3.9	2.65	4.94	4.19	2.61	5.09	3.72	2.75	4.42	3.65	3.01	4.51	3.68	2.93	4.32	4.12	3.09	4.76
	(s.e.)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)
Job Guarantees	Young	3.91	3.28	5.52	3.88	3.06	5.19	3.86	3.26	4.87	3.71	3.42	4.88	4.21	3.78	4.31	4.18	3.46	4.89
	(s.e.)	(.15)	(.15)	(.15)	(.1)	(.11)	(.09)	(.13)	(.11)	(.11)	(.13)	(.10)	(.11)	(.15)	(.12)	(.13)	(.13)	(.1)	(.09)
	Older	4.34	3.03	5.62	4.47	2.94	5.49	4.39	3.1	5.1	4.34	3.28	5.11	4.58	3.69	4.75	4.48	3.32	4.93
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)
Enviro/ Jobs	Young	3.16	3.12	5.06	2.93	2.85	4.77	3.68	3.72	4.51	3.47	4.33	4.36	3.74	3.61	4.23	3.33	3.63	4.49
	(s.e.)	(.16)	(.14)	(.17)	(.1)	(.1)	(.09)	(.12)	(.107	(.11)	(.12)	(.1)	(.11)	(.14)	(.12)	(.11)	(.1)	(.1)	(.09)
	Older	3.24	2.71	5.18	3.33	2.76	4.76	4.09	3.74	4.41	3.75	4.11	4.17	3.66	3.36	4.54	3.67	3.52	4.39
	(s.e.)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)	(.04)
Health Insurance	Young	3.78	3	5.67	3.68	2.6	5.28	3.34	2.98	5.11	--	--	--	--	--	--	3.77	2.99	4.98
	(s.e.)	(.18)	(.14)	(.13)	(.13)	(.12)	(.10)	(.15)	(.12)	(.13)	--	--	--	--	--	--	(.13)	(.12)	(.09)
	Older	4	2.75	5.42	4.11	2.44	5.31	3.76	2.93	5.01	--	--	--	--	--	--	4.0	2.94	4.89
	(s.e.)	(.08)	(.07)	(.06)	(.08)	(.07)	(.06)	(.08)	(.07)	(.06)	--	--	--	--	--	--	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)
Aid to Blacks	Young	3.89	3.33	5.56	4.29	3	5.03	4.22	2.77	4.75	4.13	3.54	4.71	4.38	3.79	4.46	4.66	3.44	4.76
	(s.e.)	(.17)	(.13)	(.16)	(.11)	(.07)	(.09)	(.15)	(.116	(.12)	(.14)	(.08)	(.1)	(.17)	(.12)	(.11)	(.13)	(.1)	(.09)
	Older	4.38	2.94	5.5	4.89	3.16	5.2	4.77	3.03	4.94	4.65	3.48	4.78	4.81	3.49	4.6	4.82	3.41	4.82
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.04)	(.04)
Defense Spending	Young	4.01	3.8	5.36	4.05	3.94	4.7	3.77	3.74	5.34	4.22	3.93	5.61	4.18	4.05	4.6	3.84	3.96	4.39
	(s.e.)	(.15)	(.15)	(.13)	(.09)	(.08)	(.09)	(.12)	(.12)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.1)	(.13)	(.09)	(.1)	(.1)	(.11)	(.08)
	Older	4.64	3.77	5.23	4.28	3.63	4.7	4.31	3.43	5.36	4.61	3.54	5.66	4.66	4.07	4.89	4.12	3.98	4.53
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.04)	(.05)	(.04)

candidate positions suggests that many young people are not simply adopting the issue positions of their preferred candidate or projecting their own, and that projection may not be occurring at very high rates.

Table 4.1 reflects the average self- and candidate-placements on each of the 7-point issue scales by age group. As mentioned earlier, for 2008 I display the means for only the old version of the questions to maintain consistency with the rest of the years under study, especially given the dramatic difference in the job guarantees question in the new version, and display the means for only the face-to-face respondents in 2000 (Table 4.1A displays the combined means for 2000 and 2008, while Table 4.1B displays the means for 2008 and 2000 separated by version. Both tables can be found in the Appendix A). On each of these scales, 4 is the midpoint. Means lower than 4 are on the liberal side of the issue spectrum while means above 4 are on the conservative side.

Economic Issues

Figure 4.1: Government Spending and Services – Self and Candidate Placement



Note: Means below 4 are on the liberal side of the issue spectrum while means above 4 are on the conservative side.

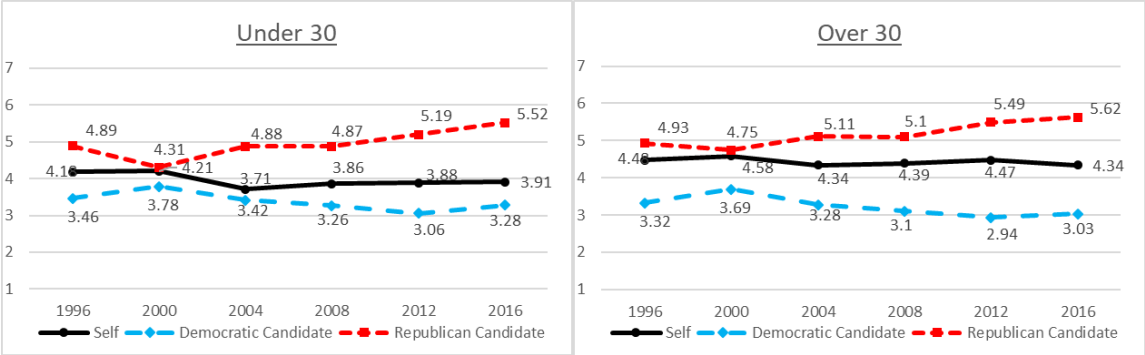
Looking first at the government spending and services self-placement means over time (solid black lines in Figure 4.1), there does appear to be some variation in the self-

placement means for young people (figure on the left). With the exception of 1996, where the mean is almost exactly at the midpoint of 4, the lower means for young people in all other years are on the more liberal side of the midpoint, favoring increased spending.[22] However, there does not appear as though these aggregate positions have become more liberal in recent election years as the means gravitate towards more liberal positions in the early Aughts, but then move towards moderation in 2012 and 2016. Individuals over the age of 30 (figure on the right), appear consistently more conservative than young people on this issue but again, there is no discernable pattern to the variation in means across time.

Both young and older Americans have consistently placed the Democratic candidate (blue dashed lines) on the liberal side of the midpoint from 1996 to 2016. Average Democratic candidate placements among both age groups have also grown more liberal over time on this issue, though the movement has not been monotonic. At the same time, there also appears to be an over-time trend indicating that the perceived stances of Republican candidates on this issue have grown more conservative over time (red dotted lines). Thus, young and older people alike see differences between the candidates, as the Republican candidate means were on the conservative side of the midpoint and the Democratic candidate means on the liberal side of the midpoint in each year under study. The differences between the candidate means for both age groups have been growing over time as well suggesting that on this issue, the masses have perceived increasing polarization among the political elites.

[22] The issue scales are coded such that values between 1 and 3 are considered the liberal side of the issue scale that Democrats tend to agree with, while values between 5 and 7 are considered the conservative or Republican side of the scale, with 4 at the midpoint.

Figure 4.2: Government Job Guarantees - Self and Candidate Placement



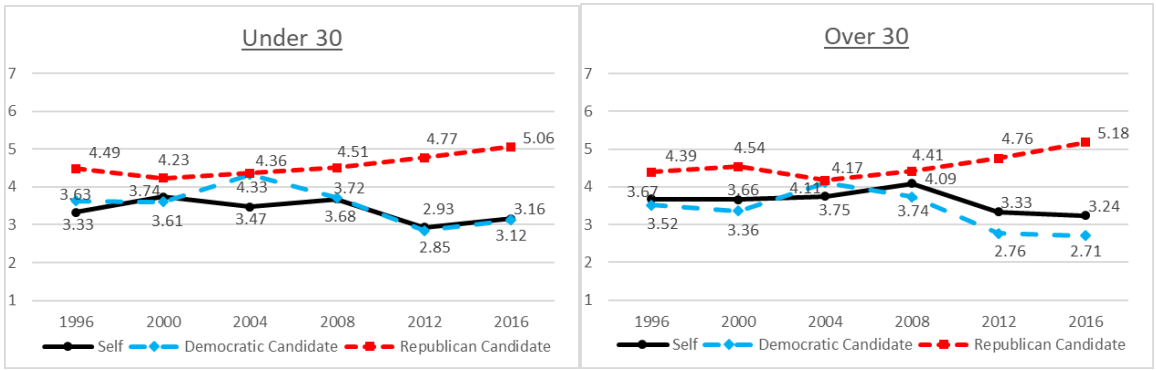
We do see some evidence of growing liberalism in the aggregate among young people on the issue of government job guarantees (Figure 4.2). In 1996 and 2000, the averages for young people were on the conservative side of the issue spectrum at 4.18 and 4.21, respectively. However, beginning in 2004 the average for 18-29-year-olds moved to the liberal side of the midpoint and has remained there since. For all years under study, the means for young people were also more liberal than the averages for individuals over the age of 30. Older individuals during this time period remained consistently on the conservative side of the midpoint with not much variation from year to year.

There also appears to be some evidence of greater ideological polarization between the candidates on the issue of government job guarantees in recent elections. The Democratic candidate averages for young people do seem to be generally growing more liberal, from 3.46 in 1996 to 3.28 in 2016. For individuals over the age of 30, Democratic candidate placement averages have also grown more liberal from an average of 3.32 in 1996 to 3.03 in 2016. At the same time, average Republican candidate placement scores have grown more conservative. The most conservative average candidate placement for both age groups came just recently in the 2016 election when Donald Trump was perceived as much more conservative on this issue than previous Republican presidents. This has led to a widening gap between the mean Democratic and Republican placement scores. While

there was a 1.43-point gap between the average Democratic candidate placement and the Republican candidate mean among young people in 1996, the gap grew to 2.24 points by 2016. Similarly, the gap between the candidate means for older Americans grew from 1.61 in 1996 to a difference of 2.59 points in 2016.

Among young people, this growing gap between the candidates appears to be driven primarily by the perceived movement to the right among Republican candidates. Among older citizens, however, the widening gap is due to the growing extremity in the perceived positions for candidates of both parties. In addition, in terms of candidate proximity in the aggregate, the mean scores for Republican candidates were actually proximally closer to the self-placement averages for the young in 1996 and 2000. This changes from 2004 to 2016, where mean self-placement scores for young people were closer to the average scores for the Democratic candidates. For all years under study, however, the average self-placement means for individuals over the age of 30 were proximally closer to the averages for the Republican presidential candidates.

Figure 4.3: Environment/Jobs Tradeoff - Self and Candidate Placement



On the environment/jobs tradeoff scale (Figure 4.3), despite my expectations for 2008, young people have remained on the liberal side of the midpoint in the aggregate, preferring environmental protection over the potential cost to jobs for all years from 1996-

2008. They are also must closer to the Democratic candidates in 2012 and 2016 with the change in question wording to the regulation of business.[23] Older individuals have also been fairly consistently liberal on this issue as well with the exception of 2008, when the mean is on the conservative side of the midpoint. They appear to be becoming more liberal on this issue over time as well.

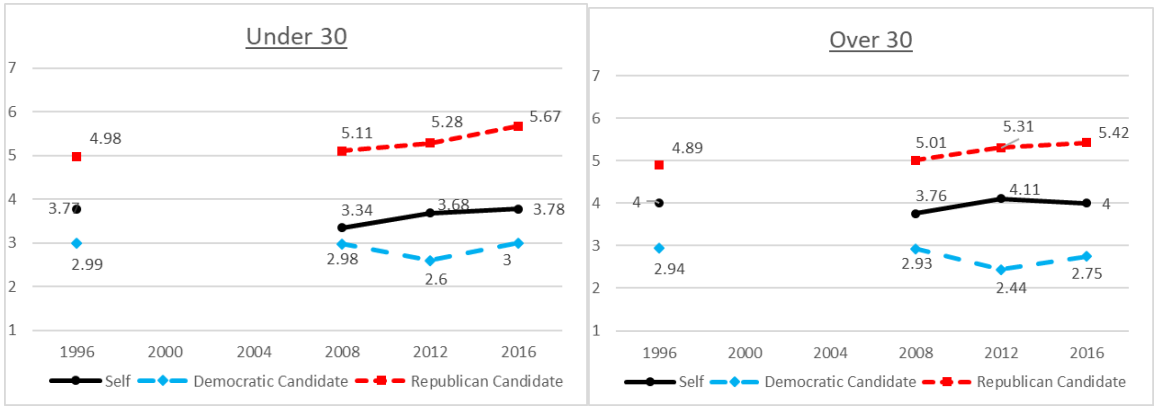
In terms of aggregate candidate placement, there does seem to be a slight trend towards liberalism in the perceived Democratic candidate stances on this issue among young people, though the trend towards liberalism is much more pronounced amongst older Americans. Perceptions of Republican candidate positions have grown much more conservative for both age groups in recent elections, and the ideological polarization between the candidates appears to be increasing.[24] But there is some important variation that should be noted here. The fact that both young and older Americans gave John Kerry an average score on the conservative side of the midpoint demonstrates that Americans do consider the positions of individual candidates on these issues rather than just regularly placing the Democratic candidates on the liberal side of the scale and Republican candidates on the conservative side of the scale. In addition, in the aggregate the average self-placement scores for young adults are spatially closer to the means for Democratic candidates than those for the Republican candidates for all years under study. For citizens over the age of 30, the average self-placement scores are closer to the means for Democratic candidates in all years except 2008 when the self-placement average was closer to the mean for the Republican presidential candidate.

[23] The slight change in question wording in 2012 and 2016 likely accounts for the drop in the means among both older and younger Americans those election years.

[24] Again, this may in part be attributable to the slight change in question wording in 2012 that was continued on the 2016 ANES.

Social Issues

Figure 4.4: National Health Insurance - Self and Candidate Placement

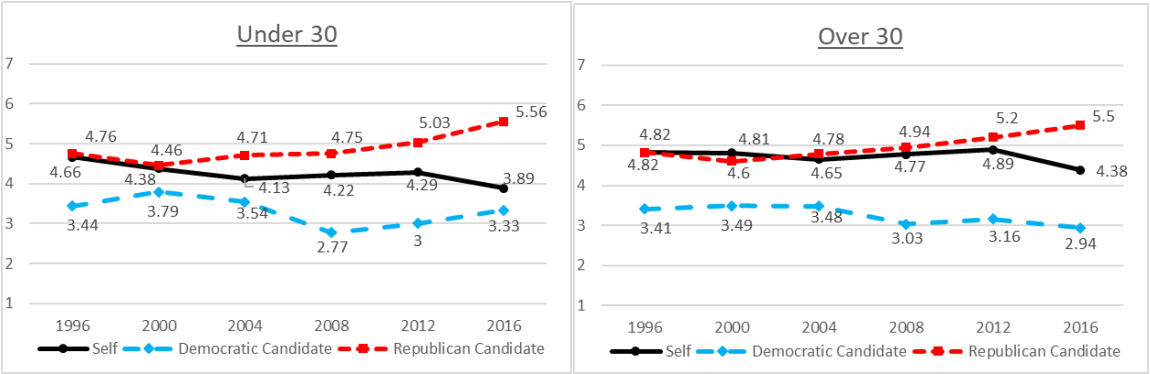


Though there were only four years in which the national health insurance question was asked, there does not seem to be much movement among young people over time (Figure 4.4). Though the mean does vary a few tenths of a point from year to year, the mean for young people stays consistently on the liberal side of the issue spectrum and consistently more liberal than the means for older Americans. There is more aggregate movement among older Americans on this issue. Where the average in 1996 was at the midpoint of 4, it moved from the liberal side of the spectrum in 2008 back to the conservative side in 2012 to 4.11 before returning to the midpoint in 2016.

Though there are fewer years with data on the national health insurance scale, there is some evidence of ideological polarization of the candidates on this issue. The average perceived distance between the candidates has grown, from a difference of 1.99 points between the candidates in 1996 to a difference of 2.68 points in 2012 among young people. Among older people, this gap widens from a 1.95 difference in the candidate means in 1996 to a 2.87-point gap between the candidate means in 2012.While both age groups have placed the Democratic candidates on the liberal side of the issue spectrum and Republicans on the conservative side, the increasing ideological polarization between the candidates

appears to be largely driven by the perceived movement of Republican candidates to the right.

Figure 4.5: Government Aid to Blacks - Self and Candidate Placement



On the government aid to blacks scale (Figure 4.5), both young and older Americans consistently remain on the conservative side of the issue scale for all years under study until 2016, when the average for young people dips below the midpoint. While the averages for young people have nonmonotonically grown more liberal, the averages for older people remained steadily conservative over time on this issue until 2016, when the average for 30+ year-olds moderated a bit (though remain on the conservative side of the midpoint). Older Americans have also remained consistently more conservative than young people on this issue in the aggregate.

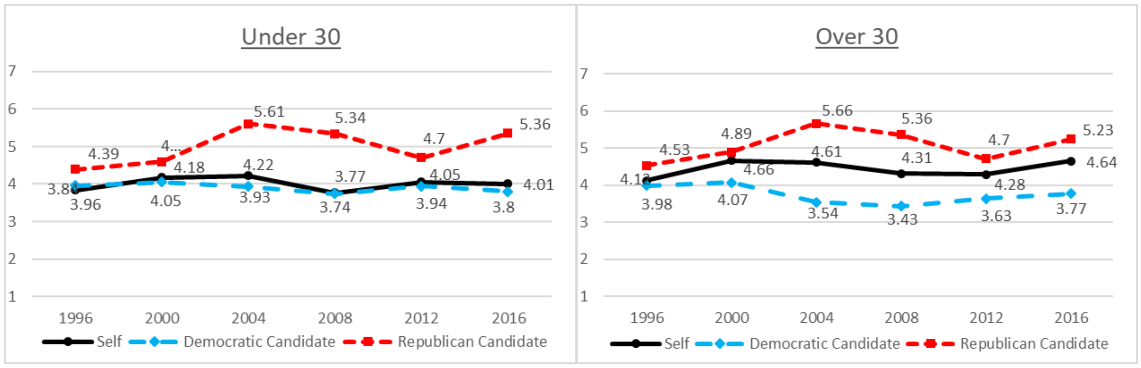
There was a slight movement towards greater liberalism in the Democratic candidate placement averages for both young and older adults in recent election years, especially in 2008 and 2012 when Barack Obama was at the top of the Democratic ticket. The mean rebounded in 2016 towards a more moderate position among the young, though interestingly it grew even more liberal for Americans over the age of 30 with Hillary

Clinton at the top of the ticket. At the same time, the means for the Republican candidate among both age groups grew more conservative in 2012 and 2016 than in previous years.

In fact, the differences between the candidates' averages seem to have grown in recent election years for both age groups, suggesting growing perceived ideological polarization of elites on this issue as well. Among the young, there was a gap of 1.32 points between the candidates' average positions in 1996 which widened to a difference of 2.23 points by 2016. For older Americans, this gap appears to have widened from 1.41 points in 1996 to 2.56 points in 2016. Interestingly, the self-placement means for both young and older Americans were closer to the average Republican candidate means for all years under study until 2016, when the self-placement average for the young was much closer to the average for the Democratic candidate.

Defense Issues

Figure 4.6: Defense Spending – Self and Candidate Placement



There is some variation in the means across time on the defense spending issue for young people, but the means do not vary in a consistent manner (Figure 4.6). In 2000, 2004, and 2012 the average for young Americans was on the conservative side of the midpoint (favoring increased spending) while in 1996 and 2008, the averages were on the more

liberal side (favoring decreased defense spending) of the midpoint. Older people, on the other hand, remain consistently on the conservative side of the midpoint in the aggregate, and the mean each year is more conservative than the mean for young Americans. It is interesting to note that there was a significant drop in the mean (almost .5) from 2004 to 2008 for young people in the height of the Iraq War where, in the aggregate, young people supported reduced defense spending. Among older individuals, there was some movement to the left between 2004 and 2008 as well, though the average remained well on the conservative side of the midpoint.

The averages for the Democratic presidential candidates' positions are not far from the midpoint in most years among 18-29-year-olds. Despite the fact that the mean Democratic candidate position for young people has been on the liberal side of the midpoint except in 2000, it does not appear as though young people view Democratic candidates as becoming more liberal on this issue over time. On the Republican side, while it does not look as if young people view all Republican candidates as more conservative on this issue, young people did see quite a stark difference between the Republican and Democratic candidates on this issue in 2004, 2008, and 2016. Two of these three elections took place in the midst of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. In 2004 and 2008, the differences between the mean Republican and mean Democratic candidate placements were 1.68 and 1.6 points, respectively. In addition, in every year under study, the average Democratic candidate placement among 18-29-year-olds was proximally closer to the self-placement means than were the averages for the Republican presidential candidate.

Average Democratic candidate placement scores among individuals over the age of 30 were more liberal than the Democratic candidate placement means for young people on the defense spending scale in each year under study except 2000. Like younger citizens, older Americans gave Al Gore in an average score on the more conservative side of the

midpoint, and this average was slightly more conservative than the mean for the Democratic candidate among young people. There may be slight leftward trend in the average Democratic candidate placement among older citizens; however, there does not appear to be a discernable trend suggesting greater perceived conservatism of Republican candidates among this age group as Republican candidate averages vary considerably by year. Like among young people, though, the gap between the average Democratic candidate placement and average Republican candidate placement grew particularly wide in 2004 and 2008 during the height of the Iraq War. These years, the distance between the candidates' averages for voters over 30 grew to 2.12 and 1.93 points, respectively, as older people noted a considerable difference between the candidates on this issue as well.

In all, there is some evidence to support H1. The average self-placement scores for young people are consistently more liberal than the means for older individuals in all years on all issues. However, there is not much evidence indicating young people have moved further to the to the left on issues in recent years. It is only on the issues of government spending and services, job guarantees, aid to blacks, and the environment/jobs tradeoff that young people seem to have become slightly more liberal in the aggregate in elections after 2004 compared to elections prior to 2004. However, the magnitude of the aggregate movement in the means is very small on most of these issues, and the movement has been non-monotonic in nature. In addition, while Americans over age of 30 are consistently more conservative in the aggregate than 18-29-year-olds on all issues, older folks are not becoming more conservative on these issues either. In fact, they appear to be moving left on the environment/jobs tradeoff and on government aid to blacks.

Have aggregate perceptions of candidate stances on these issues changed over time and has the distance between the candidates has grown to the point where young people see distinct differences between the candidates on matters of public policy? Yes, and both

young and older Americans see these differences widening over time on the government spending and services, government jobs guarantees, environment/jobs tradeoff, national health insurance, and aid to blacks scales. In fact, the greatest perceived differences between the candidates among both age groups occurred in 2016 on these issues. Thus, the public is seeing greater ideological polarization between the parties' candidates, confirming my second hypothesis (H2). While young people have always perceived a difference between the candidates (in the aggregate) on most matters of public policy, these differences are becoming more apparent. While young people did not necessarily see a greater difference between the candidates on all issues from 2004 to 2012 compared to earlier elections, they certainly did on some of the more salient issues related to problems facing the nation. In particular, young people did see a greater difference between the candidates on defense spending, national health insurance, government job guarantees, and government aid to blacks between 2004 and 2012 when compared to the 1996 and 2000 elections.

Probit Results - Model 1

While these comparisons of aggregate means are good for looking at general trends in perceptions of candidate stances on issues, it is critical to look at individual level data to determine which prospective issue proximities actually affect vote choice. In any election year, some issues will be more salient to voters than others depending on the national context in which the election occurs. To determine whether young people were proximally closer to Democrats on important issues from 2004 to 2012, and were using those issues to make their candidate choice decisions, I turn next to my proximity models.

Table 4.2: Model 1-- Determinants of Candidate Preference (Probit)

	2016		2012		2008 (Old)		2004		2000 (FTF)		1996	
Independent Variables	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older
Party Identification	.49**	.34***	.56***	.321***	.44***	.36***	.58***	.43***	.61***	.38***	.67**	.41***
	(.17)	(.06)	(.21)	(.05)	(.13)	(.05)	(.12)	(.05)	(.24)	(.05)	(.22)	(.04)
Female	.82	.21	-.3	.07	-.03	.03	-.39	-.11	.24	.30	.05	.13
	(.55)	(.21)	(.27)	(.16)	(.39)	(.18)	(.36)	(.15)	(.41)	(.18)	(.44)	(.14)
Black	1.52*	.81	.43	1.03*	(omitted)	2.44***	3.1***	.29	(omitted)	1.6***	2.9**	1.4***
	(.67)	(.48)	(.44)	(.47)		(.48)	(.68)	(.23)		(.36)	(1.1)	(.37)
Latino	-.4	.51	.10	.65***	.86	.45*	-.22	.01	-.19	.5	1.6*	.1
	(.58)	(.32)	(.37)	(.18)	(.5)	(.2)	(.63)	(.46)	(.55)	(.4)	(.76)	(.24)
Union Household	-.9	-.06	.49	-.24	-1.4**	.06	.73*	.6**	-.46	.16	1.7*	.11
	(1.04)	(.25)	(.47)	(.22)	(.53)	(.24)	(.35)	(.19)	(.64)	(.24)	(.74)	(.19)
Evangelical	-.78	-.12	-.48	-.33*	-.86*	-.68***	-.43	-.13	-.49	-.26	-.84	-.03
	(.66)	(.25)	(-.48)	(.17)	(.43)	(.17)	(.41)	(.16)	(.46)	(.2)	(.46)	(.15)
Spending	--	.13*	.09	.08	.16	.07	.18	.17***	.44*	.03	.27	.18***
	--	(.06)	(.1)	(.05)	(.13)	(.07)	(.11)	(.05)	(.2)	(.06)	(.23)	(.05)
Job Guarantees	.48***	.19**	.21*	.07	-.08	.04	.12	.17***	-.03	.18**	.11	.19***
	(.14)	(.07)	(.09)	(.05)	(.14)	(.05)	(.11)	(.05)	(.19)	(.07)	(.15)	(.05)
Environment	.33*	.24***	.20*	.14*	.33	.1	.18*	.03	.36*	.31***	.3	.16**
	(.13)	(.06)	(.1)	(.05)	(.19)	(.25)	(.09)	(.04)	(.16)	(.06)	(.17)	(.06)
Healthcare/Insurance	.03	.12**	.11	.11**	.16	.07	--	--	--	--	.22	.17***
	(.08)	(.05)	(.07)	(.04)	(.09)	(.05)	--	--		--	(.14)	(.04)
Aid to Blacks	.36*	.08	.06	.08	.03	.15***	.13	.10	.03	.19**	.69**	.22***
	(.16)	(.06)	(.11)	(.04)	(.10)	(.04)	(.17)	(.06)	(.17)	(.07)	(.26)	(.06)
Defense	.14	.27***	-.07	.23***	.04	.15**	.45***	.19***	-.04	.19	.16	.12*
	(.13)	(.08)	(.11)	(.06)	(.22)	(.05)	(.11)	(.05)	(.17)	(.1)	(.19)	(.05)
Constant	-2.6***	-1.8***	-1.57**	-1.11***	-.62	-.84***	-1.6***	-1.51***	-1.7	-1.3***	-.88	-.67***
	(.76)	(.32)	(.51)	(.26)	(.46)	(.25)	(.36)	(.19)	(.79)	(.23)	(.64)	(.17)
Pseudo R^2	.73	.76	.63	.66	.53	.6	.68	.62	.43	.58	.76	.68
N	116	688	350	1308	116	761	180	799	87	635	160	1125

Notes: *p<= .05; **p<= .01; ***p<= .001; the "black" variable was omitted from the 2008 young analysis due to perfect separation
The healthcare/insurance question was not asked at all in 2000, and candidate placement was not asked in 2004. Missing values were coded as the midpoint

The results of the probit regressions for Model 1 are reported in Table 4.2. Probit coefficients are interactive and nonlinear, and are thus difficult to interpret. Nonetheless, party identification, unsurprisingly, is statistically significant and in the predicted direction for all years under study for both age groups. But rest of the demographic control variables were only sporadically in play during the period under study. The dummy variable for female was only statistically significant in 2000, and only for young voters. Being black was a fairly consistent predictor of voting Democratic for both young and older voters. For 18-29-year-olds, this was statistically significant in 1996, 2004, and 2016, and it was a perfect predictor in both 2000 and 2008. Among older voters it was statistically significant and in the expected direction for all years under study except 2000 and 2016.

The Latino dummy variable was only statistically significant for young voters in 1996, but it became a statistically significant predictor of the vote in 2008 and 2012 among older voters. Being a member of a union household inconsistently predicted candidate support among the young, and had a positive effect on Democratic candidate preference in 1996 and 2004 but had a negative effect in 2008. Among older voters, union membership was only statistically significant and in the predicted direction in 2004. Finally, evangelicalism predicted decreased Democratic support for the young in 2008, but was statistically significant and in the expected direction among older voters in 2000, 2008, and 2012.

Among my independent variables of interest, looking first at the economic issue variables, ideological proximity to the candidates on the government spending and services issue was only statistically significant and in the predicted direction among the young in 2000. Ideological proximity on this issue was statistically significant for older voters in

1996, 2000, 2004, and 2016.[25] This might be expected given the federal budget surpluses in the late 1990s and relatively secure economy during these years. But government spending on programs is not a highly salient issue most years, especially among young people who only receive the "loudest shouts" from the political world, so it is unsurprising that this issue is not a predictor of candidate preference among young voters from 2004 to 2012.

Ideological proximity on the government jobs guarantees scale appears to have a statistically significant effect on the vote choice of young Americans in 2012 and 2016, which were the only years in which it was statistically significant. Given the lingering high unemployment rates among young people after the recession, coupled with rising amounts of student debt, this result is not altogether surprising. Perhaps this variable was not statistically significant in 2008 among young people because the unemployment rate, while rising (it was at 6.5 in the beginning of November that year), was just beginning to spike at time of the election (BLS 2017). What is surprising is that these effects are not seen among older Americans in 2012. In fact, the issue of government jobs guarantees only has a statistically significant impact on the vote choice of older Americans in 1996, 2000, 2004, and 2016. Nonetheless, given that this issue only impacts the young in 2012 and 2016, it might help explain the persistence of the age gap in vote choice in 2012.

Environment/jobs tradeoff proximity was statistically significant among young people in 2000, 2004, 2012, and 2016. The aggregate means on this issue discussed above suggest young people were generally much closer to the perceived Democratic candidates' positions on this issue in all years, suggesting young people were more interested in the sociotropic benefits of protecting the environment over the self-interest of job creation in

[25] This variable was omitted from the model for the young in 2016 due to multicollinearity.

2000 and 2004. In 2012 and 2016, the change in question wording to both protect the environment and create jobs may certainly help account for its statistical significance. It is possible that this issue aids to the age gap in vote choice from 2004 through 2012 as it seems to have an effect on the candidate preference of young people in more years than it does older voters, but it is not very likely. The magnitude of the effects are relatively small in 2004 and 2012 relative to size of the coefficients in 2000 and 2016—the latter of which are both years during which there was no age gap. In addition, the issue proximity variable was insignificant in 2008.

Moving to social issues, on the issue of national health insurance the estimated coefficient for the young is often larger than for older Americans across the models but because they are not statistically significant in any year, it is hard to say whether these predicted effects are different from 0. National health insurance does have significant effects on the candidate preference of older Americans in all years except 2008. Perhaps this issue is not as salient among young voters as it was for older voters that year since young people do not have the levels of health problems as older individuals do.

The Aid to Blacks variable was only statistically significant for both age groups in 1996 during Bill Clinton's re-election campaign. It is interesting to note that the aid to blacks variable was statistically significant among older Americans in 2008 but not in 2012 with the same Democratic candidate at the top of the ticket. Most surprisingly, though, is that fact that this variable was not statistically significant among young Americans in 2008 and 2012, but was statistically significant in 2016 when Hillary Clinton was at the top of the Democratic ticket. More than anything, though, this was probably driven by reactions against the vitriolic speech of Donald Trump and his perceived extreme conservatism on this issue. Nonetheless, opinions on this issue do not impact vote choice during the period in which we observe the age gap in vote choice.

Finally, ideological proximity to the candidates on defense spending appears to influence vote choice among older adults in each year under study except 2000. It only appears to influence youth voting in 2004, but the magnitude of this effect is much stronger than the effect among older voters holding all other variables at their means. The salience of the Iraq War was high during that election year, and even young people with little interest in politics experienced the deployment of friends and family overseas. It is therefore possible that issues of defense spending and the Iraq War were a catalyst for the age gap in vote choice that began that year. However, the insignificance of this variable in 2008 and 2012 suggests this issue alone does not explain the persistence of the gap into those election years. [26]

FURTHER ANALYSIS—PROJECTION MODELS

As mentioned earlier, it is possible that issue evaluations are a consequence of candidate choice rather than a cause, leading individuals to project their own policy positions onto their preferred candidates (Bartels 2002; Lenz 2009). In a single election, projection might be a problem. But we have no theoretical reason to expect that projection would be more powerful from 2004 to 2012 than it did in elections prior to the turn of the century, nor do we have a theoretical reason to believe it would impact young people to a greater degree than older Americans.

Nevertheless, I ran a second set of models to help determine whether projection is occurring by using the sample means for candidate placement instead of a respondent's

[26] The fact that defense spending does not appear to affect vote choice in 2008 seems to be an issue of question wording above all else. I ran separate probit regressions for each question format, the results of which are displayed in Table 4.2B in the Appendix. The coefficient for old version of the defense spending question is statistically insignificant for the young while the coefficient for the new version of the question is statistically significant and in the expected direction. One would expect that defense spending would impact candidate preference in 2008 given that young people held negative assessments of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

perceptions of a candidate's stands to provide more objective measures of candidate issue positions. A sign that projection may be present is if variables with statistically significant effects in Model 1 do not have statistically significant effects in Model 2 using the more objective measures of candidate positions on issues. This would indicate that individuals are either perceiving their preferred candidates to be closer to their own position than where the public's average position for that candidate is (and thus projecting their own positions onto candidates) or they are adopting what they think is their preferred candidate's position on an issue.

Probit Results—Model 2

The results for Model 2 can be found on Table 4.3. Comparing the results between Models 1 and 2, we see only limited evidence of possible projection in certain election years, for certain issues. In fact, projection seems to be more pronounced among older voters, particularly in more chronologically-distant elections. But the preponderance of evidence indicates that both young and older voters take the candidates' issue positions (on certain issues) into account when making their vote decisions and choose the candidates who, even using the more objective measures for candidate positions, are spatially closer to them.

Looking first at the economic issues, it is difficult to discern whether projection was a concern for young people on the government spending and services variable in 2016 since it was excluded from Model 1 due to multicollinearity and nonconvergence. But using the sample averages for the candidates' positions in Model 2, we see that government spending and services has a positive and statistically significant effect on candidate choice

Table 4.3: Model 2 - Determinants of Candidate Preference (Probit, Using Average Candidate Placement)

	2016		2012		2008 (old)		2004		2000 (FTF)		1996	
Independent Variables	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older
Party Identification	.54***	.51***	.66***	.46***	.63***	.46***	.63***	.55***	.59***	.51***	.89***	.52***
	(.25)	(.05)	(.12)	(.05)	(.16)	(.05)	(.11)	(.04)	(.16)	(.05)	(.19)	(.03)
Female	.25	.21	-.26	.08	.03	-.09	-.38	-.09	.23	.22	.58	.16
	(.39)	(.19)	(.29)	(.15)	(.37)	(.18)	(.34)	(.14)	(.34)	(.16)	(.39)	(.13)
Black	.53	1.32***	.84	1.7***	omitted	2.87***	1.58**	.5*	omitted	1.38***	.92	1.6***
	(.45)	(.39)	(.48)	(.35)	--	(.58)	(.57)	(.21)	--	(.3)	(.61)	(.39)
Latino	.41	.59*	.33	.59***	.35	.44*	.11	-.08	-.22	.26	1.74**	.39
	(.50)	(.27)	(.36)	(.17)	(.49)	(.2)	(.43)	(.43)	(.51)	(.3)	(.56)	(.24)
Union Household	-.2	-.11	.56	-.12	-1.76**	.02	.63	.52**	.21	.1	1.48	.26
	(.65)	(.21)	(.45)	(.21)	(.61)	(.22)	(.33)	(.17)	(.58)	(.22)	(.92)	(.17)
Evangelical	-.74	-.14	-.59	-.38*	-.67	-.72***	-.28	-.26	-.45	-.35*	-.78	-.12
	(.44)	(.26)	(.41)	(.16)	(.39)	(.17)	(.34)	(.15)	(.35)	(.17)	(.42)	(.13)
Spending	.23*	-.002	.33**	.15**	0	.15*	-.05	.2**	.15	.03	-.41*	.18***
	(.1)	(.06)	(.11)	(.06)	(.14)	(.07)	(.15)	(.06)	(.17)	(.08)	(.2)	(.05)
Job Guarantees	.05	.08	-.07	.01	-.08	-.06	.16	.15**	-.01	.06	.38	0
	(.1)	(.05)	(.09)	(.05)	(.18)	(.07)	(.13)	(.05)	(.25)	(.11)	(.21)	(.06)
Environment	.38**	.13**	.12	.16**	.66*	.24	3.2	.1	.33	.22*	.29	.17
	(.14)	(.05)	(.1)	(.05)	(.25)	(.16)	(3.17)	(1.62)	(.28)	(.1)	(.28)	(.1)
Healthcare/Insurance	-.02	.11*	.05	.1*	.33*	.06	--	--	--	--	.36***	.19***
	(.1)	(.05)	(.07)	(.04)	(.15)	(.05)	--	--	--	--	(.11)	(.04)
Aid to Blacks	.09	.15***	.14	.04	.16	.16*	-.04	.07	-.25	-.02	-.05	.21**
	(.13)	(.05)	(.1)	(.06)	(.15)	(.07)	(.21)	(.07)	(.27)	(.12)	(.30)	(.07)
Defense	-.25	.18**	.07	.50***	.23	.12	.22*	.16***	-.3	.3**	-.37	.17
	(.18)	(.07)	(.2)	(.11)	(.15)	(.06)	(.11)	(.05)	(.23)	(.1)	(.43)	(.14)
Constant	-2.6***	-2.5***	-2**	-1.8***	-1.08*	-1.1***	-1.7***	-1.8***	-2.1***	-1.8***	-2.2***	-1.25***
	(.56)	(.27)	(.55)	(.26)	(.53)	(.25)	(.33)	(.18)	(.65)	(.21)	(.65)	(.16)
Pseudo R^2	.61	.64	0.6	0.60	.56	.53	.59	.56	.32	.48	.69	.58
N	116	688	350	1308	116	761	180	799	87	635	160	1125

Notes: *p<= .05; **p<= .01; ***p<= .001; the "black" variable was omitted from the 2008 young analysis due to perfect separation
The healthcare/insurance question was not asked at all in 2000, and candidate placement was not asked in 2004. Missing values were coded as the midpoint

for young Americans. But projection may have occurred on this issue among adults over the age of 30 in 2016 and among younger people in 2000. While government spending and services appears to have a statistically significant on candidate preference in Model 1, the statistical significance disappears in Model 2. This is indicative that voters were not in agreement as to where to place the candidates on this issue, and were perhaps projecting their own positions onto their preferred candidates.

Government services and spending does not seem to have an effect on either age group in Model 1 in 2012. But issue proximity on government spending and services appears to have a statistically significant impact for both young and older Americans when using the sample averages for candidate positions in Model 2. Because this variable is not significant in Model 1, but is significant in Model 2, we can be reasonably certain that projection is not a great cause for concern on this issue. Individuals generally voted for the candidate whose average perceived position on the issue was spatially closer to their own, some of whom may have been unaware of that candidate's actual position on the issue. Had projection been a problem, we should have seen the opposite occur where the coefficients were statistically significant in Model 1 and not statistically significant in Model 2. The same thing occurred among older adults in 2008 and younger people in 1996, where government spending and services did not have a statistically significant effect on candidate preference in Model 1 but did Model 2. However, in 1996 the coefficient for young people was negative suggesting they voted for the candidate who was actually proximally further from them on this issue.

There is also evidence of possible projection for both age groups on the government job guarantees scale in 2016, for young people 2012, and for older individuals in 2000 and 1996. The coefficients were statistically significant in Model 1 but were insignificant in Model 2 using the more objective measures of candidate positions. Again, this points to

the possibility that there was little consensus as to where the candidates stood on this issue, and that individuals were projecting their own positions onto the candidates on this issue.

On the environment/jobs tradeoff scale, there is no evidence of projection in 2016 given that the variables were statistically significant in both models for both age groups. But in 2012, 2004, and 2000 we do see evidence of possible projection among the young as the coefficients for these variables were statistically significant in Model 1, but when using the sample means for the candidate positions the coefficients in Model 2 were not significant. Projection may have also occurred among older voters in 1996. Interestingly, however, is that fact that the environment/jobs tradeoff coefficient for young people in 2008 was not statistically significant Model 1 but was statistically significant when using the more objective measures for the candidates' positions in Model 2. Again, this probably means that young people were unaware of the candidates' stands on this issue in 2008 and just so happened to be proximally closer to their preferred candidates that year.

Moving next to social issues, there is no evidence for projection on national health insurance in 2016 as this variable was statistically significant for older Americans in both models. Both presidential candidates took relatively clear stances on these issues in the 2016 election, so this is unsurprising. But among young people in both 2008 and 1996, there were no statistically significant effects in Model 1 but when using the more objective measures for the candidates' positions, national health insurance was statistically significant in both years. Again, this probably means that young people were unaware of the candidates' stands on these issues in 2008 and 1996 and just so happened to be proximally closer to their preferred candidates on these issues that year.

On the Aid to Blacks scale, projection may be a factor among the young in both 2016 and 1996. While this variable was statistically significant in Model 1 both years, it was not statistically significant in Model 2. However, this variable was statistically

insignificant in Model 1 but was statistically significant in Model 2 among older Americans in both 2016 and in 2008. Again, this probably means this issue was low in salience, and individuals just so happened to be proximally closer to their preferred candidates those years.

Finally, in the case of defense spending, there is evidence of possible projection among older Americans on this issue on both 2008 and 1996 as the coefficients were statistically significant in Model 1 but is insignificant in Model 2. In 2004, there was no evidence of projection for either young or older Americans. The issues of defense and environment/jobs had statistically significant effects on the vote choice of the young using both objective and subjective measures for the issue positions of the candidates. It is highly likely that the candidates' positions on these issues were widely known and particularly salient that election year. Even if young people were not certain about the position John Kerry held, it was evident where George W. Bush stood on issues of defense spending in the midst of the Iraq War.

From a more comprehensive perspective, it is in the relatively low-salience election years of 2000 and 1996 that we see the most evidence of possible projection, as the salience literature suggests (Bartels 2002). In Model 1, candidate positions on government spending and services appears to significantly affect candidate preference for both 18-29-year-olds as well as citizens over 30 years old in 2000. Government job guarantees, defense spending, and environmental issues also have a statistically significant impact on vote choice for older Americans in Model 1. However, when using the more objective measures for candidate issue positions in Model 2, the significance of all of these variables disappears with the exception of defense spending for the 30+ group. This is indicative of uncertainty as to the positions of the candidates on these issues, and that individuals were projecting their own issue preferences onto their candidate of choice in that election year.

The same can largely be said for 1996. In Model 1, government aid to blacks appears to have a statistically significant impact on the vote choice of both young and older Americans. However, in Model 2, the variable is only statistically significant for the 30+ crowd, leaving room for the potential for projection among 18-29-year-olds. In fact, every single issue proximity variable was statistically significant for older Americans in 1996 in Model 1 but, when using the more objective measures in Model 2, only government spending and services, national health insurance, and government aid to blacks seems to have an effect on vote choice for older voters while defense spending, government job guarantees, and environmental issues may face issues of projection. On these low-salience issues that election year, where the candidates' positions were probably not clearly articulated or widely known among the public, the likelihood of projection should increase. Model 2 also shows that young people generally voted for the candidate closest to themselves on the national health insurance scale, though this variable was statistically insignificant in Model 1.

In sum, issue salience seems to be a factor that when considering the impact of issue proximities on candidate choice. It is on the relatively low-salience issue of environmental policy where projection seems mostly likely to occur among the young, though we do see some evidence of possible projection on aid to blacks in 2016 and 1996, government job guarantees in 2016 and 2012, and government spending and services in 2000. But the possibility for projection appears more frequently among older Americans on more issues in years where the election is lower-salience and the positions of the candidates on these issues are perhaps not as widely known. The larger number of issues possibly affected by projection among older Americans may be due to their stronger partisan attachments and greater affect towards the parties and their candidates. In addition, in light of Lenz (2009), on very salient issues during an election year (like defense spending during a war), the

relative positions of the candidates on these issues are broadly known and less prone to projection.

What this all amounts to is that issue positions can and do have an independent effect on vote choice. But salience is key to accurately using issue proximities to predict candidate choice, and many vote models still fail to account for salience when they model issue effects. Both young and older voters see a difference between the candidates on some issues, and do seem to use issue proximities to a limited degree when choosing which candidate to support. Thus, we do see some evidence for H3—that young people were proximally closer to Democratic candidates on the important issues in recent elections, specifically defense issues in 2004, and seemed to use those issues when making their vote decisions. In 2004, defense spending had a very large effect on vote choice for young people, holding all other variables at their means. And as noted in the footnote above, while defense spending was statistically insignificant among young people in 2008, it is likely due to the split sampling of the question that year as the "new" version of the question was statistically significant among the individuals who received it (Table 4.2B in Appendix). The statistically significant coefficients for government spending and services in 2012 and 2016, and national health insurance in 2008 suggest that young people do generally stand closer to the Democratic presidential candidates on issues but they may not be aware that they do because these issues were not very salient to them.

There is also only limited support for H4, that young people used prospective issue preferences to a greater extent during the period from 2004 to 2012 than in earlier election years, but this only seems to be true for defense spending in 2004. Again, this limited closed-ended list of issues does not cover the whole universe of issues that may impact vote choice in any election year, and many of these issue scales are poor proxies for other foreign or domestic issues that that were salient in the national context. What this list does

demonstrate, particularly with the issue of defense spending in 2004, is that only very *salient* issues of a campaign are likely to have a strong effect on the vote choice of young people.

DISCUSSION

The major purpose of this chapter has been to explore the prospective issue attitudes of young people from 2004 to 2012 to determine whether these short-term factors affected candidate preference for young people during this turbulent period in politics. The evidence for this was rather limited, with the exception of defense issues in 2004 (and possibly 2008). But while it is limited, there is some real evidence that support for Kerry and Obama among younger voters was at least partially based on prospective issue preferences, and these issues were incredibly salient during those election years. Older voters, with more political experience and higher levels of political sophistication, seem better able to incorporate prospective issue proximities into their candidate choice calculations.

On some issues, in certain campaign years, issue preferences could be an artefact of projection where individuals adopt their preferred party's or candidate's position as their own or project their own positions onto their preferred candidate. I cannot say definitively whether projection is occurring since projection effects are not directly testable using these data, and such a claim would have weak internal validity. But shifts in the aggregate results between Model 1 and Model 2 suggest the possibility that that projection occurs among both young and older individuals for certain issues in certain election years. Indeed, it seemed to impact older people more in the low-salience elections in 1996 and 2000. It is plausible that older individuals, with stronger affective attachments to the parties, may engage in projection more often when issues are not very salient in an election year (e.g. Alvarez and Nagler 1998). If young people are not as affectively attached to the parties as

older citizens are, they appear less likely to project their own issue preferences onto the candidates and more likely to admit they do not know where a candidate stands on an issue.

For young people, projection may be more prevalent on low-salience issues like the environment over many election cycles. It also seemed to particularly affect young people on the government job guarantees issue in the 2012 and 2016 elections, as employment was an important issue to young Americans in the aftermath of the 2008 recession since young people held the highest unemployment rates in the country (Maloney 2010).

Projection does not seem to occur as much in years like 2004, where only one or two issues affected vote choice. But the issue that had the strongest effect on candidate choice among young people was extremely high-salience and the candidate's positions were relatively well-known, allowing them to recognize differences between the candidates on those issues and vote for the candidate whose positions on those issues are aligned more closely with their own preferences. In fact, most changes in an individual's political loyalties during their political socialization period are triggered by political events that are usually focused only on a narrow range of specific attitude objects (Sears and Valentino 1997). This means that only a few issue areas might have a rather large impact on a young person's partisanship and behavior at any one point in time.

Regardless of whether projection is occurring or not, most issues that affect the vote choice of young people also affect vote choice for older Americans within an election, though more issues tend to factor into the vote choice of older Americans. It is conceivable that prospective issue proximities do not make that much of an impact on the vote choice of young people since it they require rather firm preferences on a wide range of public policies that these low-interest, low-engagement voters may simply not have. Instead, it may be the more general problem concerns of voters that make a difference among elections. Campaigns prime certain issues or problems over others to increase their salience

so voters often weigh these issues more heavily when making candidate evaluations (Petrocik 1996). The closed-ended issue position questions included in the ANES do not allow for the full universe of issues on which a citizen may base their vote. It is therefore possible that I find only limited effects for issue proximities because the impact of policy attitudes on candidate preference depends on the importance or salience of those attitudes.

Open-ended responses are perhaps the best way to measure the salient considerations individuals use when making their candidate choices as they do not impose much survey-based constraint on individuals' responses. To get around the limitations stemming from closed-ended questions, which are limited in scope and may not reflect the salience of the national context, I utilize open-ended party and candidate likes-dislikes questions in the next chapter to identify references to extant national circumstances and candidate performance. In addition, these open-ended responses allow us a better look at how partisanship, retrospective assessments of party performance, prospective issue preferences, candidate traits, and the national context more generally factor into the considerations affecting candidate choice.

Chapter 5: Retrospective Voting and Salience

As discussed in the preceding chapters, 18-29-year-olds today are both more independent of the parties than older Americans are and more independent than previous generations were at the same age. Given their relative lack of attachment to the political parties (Chapter 3), it is possible that the age gap in vote choice from 2004 to 2012 resulted less from the movement of young people and more from the non-movement of older individuals to the political forces affecting the nation. Young people should be more reactive to the shorter-term factors affecting vote choice than older Americans given their weaker partisans roots and more malleable attitudes, particularly in times of political crisis. Due to their general disinterest in politics, in quieter political times these short-term forces may not lead to noticeable behavioral differences from older Americans simply because they are not paying as much attention to the political context. Thus, in this chapter I examine whether young people are more reactive to candidates, national context, and issues—including retrospective assessments of party performance on those issues—during times of political turbulence.

While studies of individual-level vote choice often provide no more than a cursory nod to the national context and the actions of candidates and their campaigns, both are necessary for understanding the diverging opinions of the young from older Americans. The national context was a toxic stew for Republicans in 2004 and 2008, and the incumbent thermometer ratings in Chapter 3 suggest there was some strong anti-Bush sentiment simmering in the minds of young people. It is plausible that this sentiment tainted the Republican brand as a whole, leading younger people to be particularly negative towards Republican candidates. But by 2016 the national context had changed, and the anti-

Republican sentiment was no longer present. And in this most recent presidential election, the age gap in vote choice disappeared.

The political environment from 2004 to 2012 was a period of particular unrest due to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the most severe recession since the Great Depression. The issues young people faced when coming of political age during this period were arguably more compelling than those previous age cohorts faced at the same age (with the possible exception of older Baby Boomers), to the point where it was difficult for even the most disinterested of young people to ignore the problems facing the country. In Chapter 4, I did not find solid evidence that young people were using prospective issue proximities when making their vote choice decisions during this period, with the exception of defense spending in 2004. Yet the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, related to defense spending, may be the most salient issue impacting young people since the Vietnam War. Perhaps all it takes are retrospective assessments of party or candidate performance on one or two very large and salient problem areas to move the attitudes and behavior of young people in a meaningful way.

In addition, the closed-ended nature of the issue scales in Chapter 4 did not allow for the whole universe of issue areas to be explored nor do they allow an investigator to uncover which issue areas were particularly salient in an election year. Prospective issue proximities also do not take retrospective assessments of party performance on salient issues or national problems into account. This chapter seeks to rectify this by identifying references to extant circumstances and candidate or incumbent performance and the extent to which these short- and long-term factors enter the candidate choice equation for both young and older voters using American National Election Survey responses to open-ended questions about party and candidate likes and dislikes. Because political conditions, predominant events, and campaign messaging can alter the salience of issues for voters,

open-ended responses allow for a more nuanced examination of the considerations affecting voters' evaluations of the parties and candidates.

Individual-level policy attitudes change slowly, so the critical difference among elections is not necessarily the exact policy positions of voters and candidates per se; in fact, because young people are fairly politically inexperienced and unsophisticated, we probably should not expect them to hold specific positions on issues or know exactly where candidates stand. Instead, the *problem* concerns of the voters likely have a greater effect on candidate choice since voters often do not have clear ideas about what policies best deal with a problem (Petrocik 1999). As such, this chapter applies John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory of voting, which posits that candidates and their campaigns will frame the vote as decision to select the candidate who is better able to resolve the salient problems of the day. Depending on national conditions and context, candidates attempt to increase the salience of some problems over others, and voters then choose among candidates based on their perceptions of which party is better able to "handle" those issues. Given the results of Chapters 3 and 4, my research question for Chapter 5 is quite simple: What effect did national conditions and the problems on the national agenda during the period between 2004 and 2012 have on the candidate choice decisions of young people?

I posit that prevailing national conditions and retrospective evaluations of party and incumbent performance on salient national problems damaged evaluations of the Republican Party and reduced support for its candidates among young people. With weaker predispositions, the more malleable partisan attitudes of the young should result in performance issue attitudes and candidate factors—the short-term forces affecting the vote—having a strong impact on candidate choice for 18-29-year-olds. The effects of these short-term forces should be moderated by party factors among the older electorate due to their more crystallized partisan predispositions, leading to the age gap in vote choice we

saw from 2004 to 2012. The effects among the young should be especially large for perceived failures on performance issues areas, particularly those of economic policy and foreign policy. In addition, the Republican Party's renewed focus on moral issues, an issue area they "own", during this period was seemingly at odds with the relatively liberal and less religious attitudes of young people today and may have contributed to the anti-Republican sentiment of the time.

Given the turbulent nature of the issues on the national agenda during this period—the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, the economic recession in 2008, and the fight for gay rights/marriage—the candidate and issue factors should be stronger evaluative measures among young people when assessing parties and candidates for office between 2004 and 2012 relative to prior election years, and their behavior affected accordingly. Once the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were largely over, the economy had sufficiently recovered, and the Supreme Court came to a decision on the issue of gay marriage in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), the age gap in candidate choice disappeared in 2016 as the anti-Republican context from 2004 to 2012 shifted back to a pre-Iraq equilibrium.

This leads to four hypotheses to be tested. My first hypothesis (H1) is that perceived Republican failures on performance issues—especially economic policy and foreign affairs—should provide Democrats with a performance lease on these issue areas from 2004 through 2012. This should be reflected in the partisan valence scores for these issue areas, which will be discussed further below.

The turbulent national context, and perceived performance failures on salient national problems, should also factor into candidate choice from 2004 to 2012 among voters of all ages. However, because older people have more deeply-rooted political predispositions like party identification, the effects should be more pronounced among younger citizens. The salience of the issues on the national agenda was sufficient such that

even young people, who are normally disengaged with and uninterested in politics, were paying attention and could attribute blame to the Republican Party. In fact, because of their relative inattention to and disinterest in politics under normal political conditions, performance issues and candidate assessments should have an effect of greater magnitude on candidate choice of the young during turbulent periods in politics compared to more quiescent times. Thus, my second hypothesis (H2) is that issue and candidate factors should have a greater relative impact on the candidate choice of young people from 2004 to 2012 than in previous election years due to national conditions and the nature of the issues on the political agenda during this period. Performance issues on foreign affairs and economic issues, in particular, are expected to have an effect of greater magnitude on the vote of young people during this period when compared to elections prior to 2004, perhaps along with moral issue attitudes due to the shift in focus among Republican candidates in the 2004 election.

Party-related factors, on the other hand, should factor into candidate choice more frequently among older adults relative to younger voters for all years under study, and especially in recent elections due to their more crystallized partisan attachments and higher levels affective polarization as demonstrated in Chapter 3. This should also temper the impact of short-term forces on the vote choice of older Americans, especially during the period from 2004 to 2012. As such, my third hypothesis (H3) is that party-related factors should factor into the candidate choice decisions of older Americans more regularly than for younger people, mitigating the effects of short-term forces during periods of political unrest.

Finally, given the relatively turbulent nature of politics in the 1970s in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and Watergate, we should also expect short-term factors to have stronger effects on candidate choice among young people during this period compared to

more quiescent times. Therefore, my fourth hypothesis (H4) is that performance issue and candidate assessments had a greater relative impact on candidate choice for young people in 1972 and 1976 compared to subsequent election years. However, because the country had just experienced a change in party systems after the end of the New Deal Party system (Bibby and Schaffner 2008; Sundquist 2011), and because affective polarization is a somewhat recent phenomenon, the party roots that stabilize the attitudes and behaviors of older voters may not be as deep and the party effects not as pronounced during this period when compared to 2004 through 2012.

ISSUE OWNERSHIP AND THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

According to the issue ownership theory of voting, parties have distinct issue-handling reputations rooted in the party coalitions. Party constituency ownership of an issue area tends to be long-term because the foundation of ownership lies in the sociologically distinctive constituencies of the parties, and the social groups that make up the party constituencies want different benefits, protections, or changes from the status quo from government (Petrocik 1996). Issue handling reputations emerge as parties promote the policy concerns of their constituencies that are reinforced by political conflict and their performance on those issues. Candidates campaign on issues that are advantageous to them due to these party reputations to prime the salience of those issues as considerations citizens use when making their vote decisions. As such, issue ownership may be an asset to a candidate because just being associated with a party gives the impression that they are able to implement better policies and programs for dealing with problems "owned" by their political party.

While issue-handling reputations are generally stable in the long run, these party reputations are regularly tested and reinforced by the choices made by political

officeholders (Petrocik, Benoit, and Hasen 2003). Some issue areas, like foreign affairs and the economy, are not owned by either party and any issue handling advantage or ownership is conferred by the record of the incumbent. Short-term circumstances can change a party's advantage on a performance issue when performance problems arise, such as foreign policy failures or when economic downturns occur. Therefore, retrospective evaluations can work for or against the incumbent party depending on whether conditions are good or bad in the country, and are usually associated with issues and administrative performance (Weisberg and Hill 2004, 29). The non-incumbent party or candidate can gain a "lease", or short-term ownership of a performance issue, in times of political turmoil where the challenger can claim that the incumbent party could not handle the job.

Unlike the issue proximities explored in Chapter 4, what is key to the issue ownership theory is not the candidates' stands on particular policies, but what *problems* they promise to resolve. What the public perceives as a problem that needs solving depends both on existing national conditions and on whether campaigns engage in priming the issues they own (Petrocik 1996). While issue emphases in campaigns are specific to candidates, Republicans generally tend to "own" issues areas like moral values, tax and spending, and problems of crime and national security while Democrats "own" areas like social welfare, civil liberties, and civil rights. Therefore, an issue ownership interpretation of an election has three expectations: 1) each party has distinct issue handling reputations, and their ability to handle national problems depends on the performance record of the incumbent, 2) candidates focus the election on issues advantageous to themselves, and 3) voters will choose their preferred candidate based on the issues made salient by those campaigns.

Thus, national context is important when considering the short-term factors affecting vote choice. As I have stated many times by this point, an individual's political

views and attitudes are most affected by the political events they experience during their adolescence and early adulthood (e.g. Bartels and Jackman 2014; Beck 1975; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1979). When the political context is calm, young people should develop political views that resemble the political views of the rest of the electorate as they socialize into politics. But because some periods of time are more intensely political than others, performance issues may have a greater impact on the vote in more turbulent times, and especially on the youngest cohort of voters entering the electorate (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Miller 1992). Retrospective judgments of party performance in office based on directly experienced or perceived event and conditions, particularly on issues an individual considers important, may be used as a heuristic for prospective judgments about a party or candidate's future performance in office (Fiorina 1981, 200; Fournier et al. 2003).

Because of this, prospective and retrospective assessments of Republican performance on salient national problems are expected to be large factors in the candidate preference of the young from 2004 to 2012. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan increased the salience of foreign policy issues, as most Americans knew someone directly impacted by troop deployments or casualties during these engagements. Young people were also impacted by the 2008 economic recession harder than older adults, facing higher levels of unemployment for a longer period of time (Maloney 2010). Republican "failures" on these issue areas likely provided Democrats with a temporary "lease" on these issues, creating a political environment favoring the Democrats. While political context should have an effect on the attitudes and behaviors of both older and younger Americans, the effects may be especially pronounced among young people since political predispositions like party identification have deeper roots among older voters (Franklin 1984), and should have moderating effects on the short-term forces.

In addition, an area unexplored by the issue scales in Chapter 4 include moral issues, which rose in prominence among Republicans[27] and were a focus of candidates after the 2000 elections. While economic issues were once a main divider among groups within the parties, the connection between political party and frequency of church attendance has strengthened, resulting in a "culture war" that incentivizes candidates to focus on moral issues as part of a wedge campaign strategy (Fiorina et al. 2005, Gelman 2014). George W. Bush's campaign in 2004 brought the conservative values and issue preferences of Born-again and evangelical Protestant activists to the forefront of the Republican platform, leading to more ideologically extreme issue positions on social issues within the Republican Party (Jacobson 2009).

This is also significant because moral issues are an issue area at odds with a cohort of young voters who are less religious and more educated than previous generations (Keeter, Horowitz, and Tyson 2008; Kohut 2008). Moral issues like gay rights have a strong effect on shaping partisanship (Dancey and Goren 2010), which likely exacerbated the age gap in electoral choice from 2004 to 2012. Values-based appeals on moral issues like gay marriage and abortion affected individual-level vote choice in 2004 mostly by reinforcing and mobilizing Bush's support among those already planning to vote for him, while failing to persuade new voters (Hillygus and Shields 2005, Mulligan 2008). Additionally, while moral value attitudes among Republican identifiers have not necessarily become more conservative, they have become a more potent predictor of candidate trait evaluations among Democrats (Hetherington and Rudolph 2016).

Thus, national conditions were ripe for Democratic candidates from the period between 2004 and 2012. The nature of the problems facing the country were difficult for

[27]These are issues generally associated with the activism of the Religious Right such as abortion, stem cell research, and prayer in schools.

even the most politically disinterested individuals to ignore. Republican failures on these salient issues likely had a greater effect on young people, with their weaker political predispositions and less crystallized partisan ties, impacting candidate choice to a greater extent than older Americans whose more rooted partisanship can temper the period effects during times of political turbulence. Once national conditions improved and the context was no longer so anti-Republican, the voting behavior of young people returned to mirror that of the older electorate.

DATA AND DESIGN

While most studies applying the issue ownership theory look at media accounts to determine the salience of issues in a campaign, I use a resource that is highly underutilized by public opinion and voting behavior scholars that directly reflect the extant circumstances and national context, highlighting the most salient considerations among the public when making their candidate choice decisions in an election. I examine open-ended responses to the candidate likes/dislikes and party likes/dislikes questions from the 1972 through 2012 ANES Time Series studies to determine 1) whether prospective and retrospective assessments of issue performance and candidate evaluations became more important to the candidate choice of young people from 2004 to 2012 relative to elections prior to 2004, 2) which performance issue areas became more important, and 3) whether party factors played into the candidate preference equation among the older electorate more frequently than for the young.[28]

The ANES open-ended questions, which have been included in each survey since its inception in 1948, ask what each respondent likes or dislikes about the candidates and the parties. For example, the Democratic presidential candidate "like" question reads,

[28] 2016 ANES open-ended responses were not available in time for coding and analysis.

"What is it that [you] like about [Democratic presidential candidate's name]?" The Republican Party dislike question reads, "What [do you] dislike about the Republican Party?" The respondent is then able to provide free-form responses to these questions, and the first five mentions are coded according to the codebook provided by the ANES.[29]

The 1972 through 2004 open-ended responses were pre-coded by the ANES, and the categories into which they were coded can be found in the appendices for each year of study at www.electionstudies.org. After 2004, the American National Election Studies no longer coded these open-ended responses, so I hand-coded the 2008 and 2012 open-ended responses myself according to the 2004 Times Series codebook and analyzed these responses in the same fashion as I did the earlier studies. For the 2,323 respondents in 2008, I coded 11,817 open ended statements. In 2012, 2,056 face-to-face respondents provided 13,386 responses. A small number of new categories specific to 2008 and 2012 were contextually created based on the data, developed through a careful reading of the statements provided by respondents.[30] Each response was assigned to one, and only one, category according to the codebook.[31]

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[29] Up to the first five like or dislike mentions are coded per party/candidate from 1976 to 2012. However, there are two things to note about the 1972 data. First, the ANES only asked the party- and candidate-likes/dislikes questions of half the sample to reduce overall interview length that year (Miller 1999). Second, only three responses to each question were coded by the ANES for each respondent. Although not many respondents provided four or five mentions to these questions in subsequent years, the frequencies of responses in 1972 should naturally be lower than for the later years of the study because of the ceiling change. This may also have an effect on the probit model predicting candidate choice in 1972, as will be discussed further below.

[30] Two categories were added in 2008, both related to Barack Obama. The first was a general candidate comment relating to Obama's "name", and the second referred to the birther controversy surrounding his candidacy. Two other categories were added in 2012, the first referring to programs related to student loans and financial aid and the second related to illegal immigration and the Dream Act.

[31] Using an across-time coding reliability method (Schreier 2012), a random sample of ten percent of the 2008 statements were blindly recoded after a nine-month break. According to this method, the researcher should forget the original coding scheme and will rely on the codebook to recode the sample, thus creating a trustworthy inter-coder reliability score. This yielded a Krippendorff's alpha score of 0.864, far above the standard $\alpha \geq .80$.

Table 5.1: Proportions of Individuals Offering Likes/Dislikes Comments, by Year and Age Group

		Number of Comments						
Year	Age Group	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	10+
2012	18-29	10	14	20	11	11	8	27
	30+	6	9	11	13	13	12	36
2008	18-29	13	21	16	12	11	9	18
	30+	7	11	16	17	14	11	24
2004	18-29	7	15	14	11	11	9	33
	30+	5	8	10	12	12	14	39
2000	18-29	15	16	12	11	10	9	27
	30+	7	11	11	13	12	10	36
1996	18-29	13	18	18	17	10	7	17
	30+	7	11	16	16	13	11	25
1992	18-29	13	13	14	11	11	9	29
	30+	6	9	10	13	13	11	39
1988	18-29	20	13	11	12	10	8	25
	30+	9	10	13	12	11	10	35
1984	18-29	10	13	13	15	10	9	29
	30+	7	11	12	14	12	9	35
1980	18-29	7	13	18	15	13	10	22
	30+	5	11	15	16	14	14	25
1976	18-29	6	13	16	15	14	9	26
	30+	6	10	14	16	14	11	30
1972	18-29	7	12	16	16	16	13	20
	30+	6	10	13	18	13	13	26

Note: Rows may not total to 100 due to rounding

These open-ended responses are extremely useful for understanding how individuals see and relate to the political world, providing a window into the unguided, unfettered considerations individuals use to evaluate political candidates and the parties, and are particularly appropriate for examining the way in which citizens think about an election. In all years under study, a very large majority of respondents provided at least one response to the open-ended questions. The average proportion of older Americans who

provided at least one response across these eleven election years was about 94%, with a high of 95% in 2004 and a low of 91% in 1988. Response rates among eighteen-to-twenty one-year-olds were not quite as high as among older adults, yet still a large majority provided at least one response in each election year. The average proportion of responses across these election years was about 90%, with the lowest response rate in 1988 of about 80% and the highest in 1976 of about 94%. Table 5.1 provides a more detailed breakdown of the number of likes/dislikes responses provided by young and older voters each year, in percentages. In seven of the eleven election years, at least one-quarter of 18-29-year-old respondents provided 10 or more responses to the likes/dislikes questions, and the proportions were even higher among older adults.

I adapt John Kessel's models measuring partisan advantage utilizing open-ended responses. These were originally based on models developed by Donald Stokes in *The American Voter* (1960) and refined over the next 30 years (Kessel 2004, 65). The strength of using open-ended likes/dislikes questions is that there is not much survey-imposed constraint on responses. As such, responses to these questions reflect some of the most salient considerations voters make when considering the national context in an election year, including the problems facing the nation and the candidates who promise to solve those problems. Open-ended questions allow a researcher to measure attitudes towards the candidates, parties, issues, and groups in the electorate as well as the impact of those attitudes on vote choice, which I do for the eleven presidential elections identified above. The models that follow are good for making historic comparisons, and allow an investigator to compare the sources of vote decisions across elections (Kessel 2004; Smith and Kessel 1995; Smith, Radcliffe and Kessel 1999).

Attitude analysis using open-ended responses involves identifying both a general object (candidate, party, issue, or group connection) and a valence – a positive or negative

judgment – towards that object, with each comment given equal weighting. Responses within each of the four object categories and their valences are disaggregated and coded further into one of 17 specific domains described below, and these domains provide even greater insight into factors related to candidate choice within each age group (the coding scheme for these domains is provided in Appendix B). I determine partisan valence scores for two age groups (18-29-year-olds, and those over 30) within the electorate by performing calculations at the mass level for each election from 1972 to 2012 for the four broad object categories and seventeen specific domains found in Table 5.2. Valence scores on these domains provide valuable insight into how the extant circumstances and national context affect voter perceptions of candidate and party performance on salient national problems. In other words, valence scores can give us a sense of which party has ownership of a particular issue area in an election year.

The Domains

Table 5.2: Object and Domain Descriptions

Object	**Domain**	**Comments relating to:**
Candidate	Record and Performance	Candidate performance as an incumbent or in previously held office
	Experience and Management	Political/military experience, business-type comments (e.g. efficiency), management of advisors
	Intelligence	Intelligence, education, knowledge/information, articulation and communication skills, being realistic, and accepting new ideas
	Trust	Principles, honesty, scandals
	Personality	Strength, charisma, religiosity, other personal traits under the control of the candidate (not including age, race)
	General Candidate Comments	Personal characteristics that are not intelligence- or personality-related; includes race, age, members of the candidate's family
Party	People in the Party	Specific people in the party, both present and historical
	Party Affect	Positive or negative affect towards a party, including being a traditional partisan voter and trusting the party
	Party Administration and Conduct	Organization, composition, and conduct of a party; a catch-all category
Issues	Foreign Policy and Conditions	Defense-military issues, international issues (including defense spending), terrorism, and war (e.g. Iraq, Vietnam)
	Economic Policy and Conditions	Macroeconomic concerns including inflation, recession, unemployment, big business, taxes, government spending
	Social Welfare and Benefits	Healthcare/insurance, Social Security, distributional economic mentions (unless specifically referring to taxes)
	Moral Issues	Abortion, gay rights/marriage, religion, school prayer, stem-cell research, immigration
	Energy and the Environment	Environmental regulations, air and water pollution, and energy-related concerns (drilling, alternative energy sources)
	Other Domestic Issues	Domestic issues not included in one of the specific issue-areas above, like crime or gun control. Includes civil liberties.
	General Issue Comments	Issues (no specific issue/activity mentioned) like vague references to social change, favoring more/less gov't activity; liberalism/conservatism
Group Associations	Group Associations	References to social, racial, or economic groups

The party, candidate, and issue domains were adapted from Kessel's models to best address my research questions.[32] Candidate-related comments are divided into six domains: Record and Performance in Office, Experience and Management, Intelligence, Trust, Personality, and other General Candidate comments. The Record and Performance in Office category includes comments related to how a candidate has performed in previously-held offices or as a current incumbent. These include general mentions of performance rather than performance on specific issues, such as "He's doing a good job.".

Experience and Management includes mentions of political and military experience, business-related comments such as efficiency, and how a candidate manages advisors and others around him. The Trust category contains comments relating to principles, honesty, and scandals. Intelligence includes statements about intelligence, education, knowledge and information, being realistic, having common sense, and accepting new ideas. This also includes statements about a candidate being able to clearly communicate ideas to the public. Responses indicating strength, charisma, religiosity, and other personal traits under the control of the candidate (not including things like age or race) are coded under Personality. General Candidate Comments include any reference to a candidate that does not fit into one of the other five subcategories, including statements like "I just like him" or "I hate everything about him."

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[32] The candidate domains I use are the same as those used in Kessel's models. For the party domains, Kessel only included two domains—People in the Party and Party Affect. I split party affect comments and party administration and conduct comments into two different domains. The issue domains I use differ slightly as well. Kessel's issue domains included Civil Liberties, Natural Resources, and Agriculture. Instead of Civil Liberties (which received few mentions, especially in recent election years), I included the Moral Issues domain, and instead of Natural Resources I created a more comprehensive Energy and the Environment domain. Finally, because many issue areas did not fit well into the other domains, and virtually no one provided responses in the Agriculture domain, I replaced it with an Other Domestic Issues domain. In addition, while Kessel did not create an object category or domain for Group Associations, I included these comments in my models because so many individuals provided responses referring to group associations similar to one of Converse's (1964) levels of conceptualization since Petrocik (1999) notes that Democrats "own" the topic or issue area of social class and group relationships.

Party-related comments are divided into three domains: People in the Party, Party Affect, and Party Administration and Conduct. People in the Party includes mentions of people in a party other than the candidate himself, like party leaders in Congress, past presidents, and state or local candidates. The Party Affect category contains comments suggesting positive or negative affect towards one of the parties, including things like being a traditional partisan voter, trusting the party, and having a belief that the party can win. Party Administration and Conduct is a catch-all category for responses that refer to the organization, composition, and performance of the parties such as whether the party is well-organized, representative of the country, factionalized, or listens to the people.

Issue-related to comments are divided into six domains: Foreign Affairs and Policy, Economic Policy and Conditions, Social Welfare, Moral Issues, Energy and the Environment, Other Domestic Issues, and General Issue comments. The Foreign Policy category includes both defense-military issues and international issues like defense spending, missile defense, terrorism, national security, and war (including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and mentions of bringing troops home). Economic Policy and Conditions responses refer to macroeconomic concerns like inflation, recession, unemployment, taxes, government spending, "bad times", and jobs.[33] This domain also includes comments like "The economy is better under them" or "Cost of living is lower under them" when referring to one of the parties or candidates.

Social Welfare includes domestic distributive policies like public education, welfare, healthcare/health insurance (including Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act), Social Security, and aid to the poor. Moral Issues include divisive cultural issues

[33] Distributional economic mentions are generally included in the social welfare category.

including abortion, gay rights and gay marriage, and immigration.[34] Energy and the Environment handles comments referring to environmental regulations, air and water pollution, and energy-related concerns like drilling for oil or developing alternative energy sources. Other Domestic Issues contains domestic issues not included in one of the specific issue-areas mentioned above (e.g. crime, gun control). Finally, General Issue Comments incorporates responses that refer to issues but do not necessarily indicate a specific issue or activity, such as general assessments of "ideas" or "stands", continuing unspecified Republican or Democratic policies, and references to liberalism and conservatism. [35]

Group Associations is the only category that is both an object and domain. All group-related mentions such as "He's good for Hispanics" or "They're for the rich" are categorized within this object/domain. This also includes vague comments like Democrats are "more for the people" or Republicans are "good for corporations".

Valence Calculation

Mass partisan valence scores are created by first coding each response as positive or negative within each broad object category and specific domain. Take, for example, a respondent in 2008 answering the Republican candidate-like question with "He's pro-life, a war veteran, and I like his tax plan." This response includes three objects: an issue (abortion/pro-life), a candidate (war veteran), and another issue (tax plan/policies).

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[34] Immigration is included as a Moral Issue based on the classification of moral and cultural issues by Ellis and Stimson (2012, pp.50-53). I ran models with immigration coded as a domestic issue as well, though the model fit was poorer and less predictive.

[35] Following Kessel's coding scheme, strictly ideological mentions such as "He is liberal" or "They are too conservative" were coded under General Issue Comments. This can be justified by considering that ideology can be conceptualized in three ways. The first is as a sort of self-identification, though individuals left of moderate tend to avoid the term "liberal" (Jarvis 2005), favoring the term "progressive". The second is to think of ideology in terms of attitude constraint, and ideological levels of conceptualization as described by Converse (1964). But the third way to think about ideology, as it is utilized in this categorization scheme, is most often espoused by spatial voting scholars (e.g. Jessee 2009) by viewing degrees of liberalism and conservatism as a summary of issue positions across issue domains.

Because all three were provided under the "like" question, all three have a positive valence. Each of these mentions are then re-coded into one of the seventeen domains—here into Moral Issues, Experience and Management, and Economic Policy and Conditions, respectively.

Next, each response is sorted into one of four columns according to which party that response favors or disfavors—pro-Republican, anti-Republican, pro-Democrat, or anti-Democrat (the three mentions in the example in the paragraph above would be coded as pro-Republican mentions.) These columns are then combined to create a summary measure expressed in terms of mass Democratic partisan valence (by convention), as positive attitudes about Democrats and negative attitudes about Republicans tend to produce Democratic votes (Kessel 2004, 68). The sum of pro-Democratic and anti-Republican responses are taken as a proportion of all comments, and turned into a valence score by subtracting 50 from the sum to create a neutral point at zero. Negative values indicate a negative Democratic valence and thus a Republican advantage on that particular domain, while values above zero indicate a positive Democratic valence. The model is:

$$Democratic\ Valence_j = [((Pro\text{-}Democratic_j) + (anti\text{-}Republican_j))*100\ /N]-50$$

where j stands for a particular domain (j= 1…17). The valence within each domain is constructed in this manner, with each comment weighted equally. Higher positive values indicate stronger Democratic valences and lower negative values indicate stronger Republican valences for a domain, while valences close to zero demonstrate only marginal advantages to one candidate or party on a domain.

The distribution of the total number of comments is worth mentioning. Tables 5.6 through 5.16 in Appendix B provide breakdowns of the number of positive and negative

comments for both parties for each age group, by attitude objects and specific domains, for each presidential election year under study (1972-2012). For most years, the plurality of comments concern issues for both age groups in each election year with the exceptions of 1976 and 1980 for both age groups and 1986 for older Americans, even though respondents are not directly asked about issues. These issue mentions include both prospective and retrospective assessments of party and candidate performance on these issues. The sheer number of issue-related comments, despite the prompts asking specifically about the candidates and parties, suggests that many voters do in fact evaluate political candidates and the parties based on issue concerns and not solely on blind party devotion or seemingly-superficial candidate traits.

MASS VALENCES BY AGE GROUP

Tables 5.3A and 5.3B display the valences for each domain in each election year, by age group. The aggregate valences on the issue domains are the best way to determine which issue areas are perceived to be "owned" or "leased" by a party or candidate in any given election year. Again, higher positive values indicate stronger Democratic valences and lower negative values indicate stronger Republican valences for a domain, while valences close to zero demonstrate only marginal advantages to one candidate or party on a domain. In addition, the valences for the candidate and party domains also suggest which party or candidate held an advantage on those particular traits. These candidate, party, and issue assessments are a direct reflection of the national conditions and circumstances in an election year.

For most years, the valences for the young on most domains run in the same direction as valences for older individuals, with a few exceptions. Most notably, young and older Americans appear divided on Moral Issues, with the positive valence for the young

Table 5.3A: Aggregate-Level Valences, by Age Group 1996-2012

Object or Domain		***2012***	***2008***	***2004***	***2000***	***1996***
Record and Performance	18-29	21.63	26.67	-2.00	1.35	13.27
	30 and over	16.16	15.77	-2.76	1.79	16.12
Experience and Management	18-29	-10.16	-11.59	-6.25	13.41	-4.22
	30 and over	-9.94	-17.91	-1.84	9.92	-10.00
Trust	18-29	24.51	2.94	-27.36	-14.06	-29.80
	30 and over	20.26	-9.56	-9.63	-16.20	-36.98
Intelligence	18-29	34.13	25.64	14.91	13.46	35.71
	30 and over	33.28	26.75	17.73	16.12	25.27
Personality	18-29	25.00	-1.06	-34.81	-15.08	11.54
	30 and over	22.26	6.56	-30.00	2.69	-0.80
General Candidate Comments	18-29	22.89	22.54	16.67	-3.33	21.43
	30 and over	19.02	14.27	3.47	-7.71	13.48
Total Candidate Comments	*18-29*	*17.58*	*12.92*	*-0.95*	*-1.75*	*5.56*
	30 and over	*14.49*	*4.65*	*-5.69*	*-0.83*	*0.65*
Party Administration and Conduct	18-29	12.90	8.48	-6.71	3.75	3.23
	30 and over	11.05	6.68	-2.69	-2.79	-4.35
Party Affect	18-29	22.00	20.19	15.85	11.29	10.47
	30 and over	21.64	20.56	8.30	9.92	9.11
People in the Party	18-29	11.76	27.78	18.75	-12.07	22.73
	30 and over	11.90	18.79	-12.41	-2.99	5.81
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*14.54*	*13.74*	*1.61*	*5.16*	*5.77*
	30 and over	*12.87*	*10.13*	*-1.69*	*-0.09*	*0.91*
Foreign Policy	18-29	6.82	19.54	15.09	-18.29	-11.90
	30 and over	1.15	14.85	8.34	-15.59	-5.06
Economic Policy	18-29	14.71	17.02	11.48	7.14	3.13
	30 and over	4.25	18.36	7.98	0.84	6.85
Social Welfare	18-29	15.29	19.14	17.47	13.35	23.28
	30 and over	10.54	15.05	4.84	0.84	6.61
Moral Issues	18-29	16.21	0.39	13.16	2.00	7.01
	30 and over	2.21	-10.13	-1.61	-2.07	-5.11
Energy and the Environment	18-29	22.22	33.64	36.49	25.56	31.25
	30 and over	15.22	16.67	43.44	18.86	37.25
Other Domestic Issues	18-29	29.00	18.75	27.33	5.80	11.18
	30 and over	19.46	2.63	18.59	3.13	6.94
General Issue Comments	18-29	7.63	14.53	5.17	7.14	8.57
	30 and over	5.82	9.47	-9.47	-13.56	-2.03
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*14.55*	*16.21*	*11.08*	*6.50*	*8.14*
	30 and over	*6.86*	*11.08*	*3.95*	*0.79*	*2.83*
Group Associations	*18-29*	*40.08*	*36.43*	*35.45*	*34.11*	*33.52*
	30 and over	*36.92*	*37.30*	*33.03*	*28.62*	*30.87*

Table 5.3B: Aggregate-Level Valences, by Age Group 1972-1992

Object or Domain		***1992***	***1988***	***1984***	***1980***	***1976***	***1972***
Record and Performance	18-29	12.93	6.63	-24.77	7.65	12.68	-19.79
	30 and over	11.36	6.67	-18.27	8.56	5.60	-27.59
Experience and Management	18-29	-15.83	-11.07	-10.68	-3.37	-9.15	-31.41
	30 and over	-15.51	-16.07	-11.13	-8.59	-14.56	-29.92
Trust	18-29	-9.78	3.97	2.94	26.62	-3.80	15.00
	30 and over	-10.71	9.29	-0.89	12.35	-10.36	6.14
Intelligence	18-29	27.66	12.03	-3.93	24.39	12.26	-27.94
	30 and over	15.70	8.97	0.17	19.96	-2.67	-35.05
Personality	18-29	-12.89	5.42	-24.65	-10.91	-12.04	-28.57
	30 and over	-10.40	0.82	-25.40	-9.09	-7.58	-33.62
General Candidate Comments	18-29	12.43	1.41	6.94	11.88	8.82	-7.69
	30 and over	7.89	2.50	0.05	11.81	2.25	-19.98
Total Candidate Comments	*18-29*	*2.21*	*-1.41*	*-7.64*	*4.92*	*-0.53*	*-15.27*
	30 and over	*0.77*	*-3.88*	*-7.26*	*3.63*	*-3.66*	*-19.77*
Party Administration and Conduct	18-29	2.79	-3.14	1.73	-1.05	-0.68	-4.55
	30 and over	-2.22	-7.97	-5.76	-5.41	-7.57	-10.90
Party Affect	18-29	1.79	10.55	20.73	-1.72	27.14	22.22
	30 and over	12.50	10.54	19.59	15.38	17.53	13.03
People in the Party	18-29	-7.63	-3.66	-14.63	7.14	15.94	-13.33
	30 and over	2.69	-8.90	-13.16	2.17	12.20	-22.24
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*1.68*	*0.46*	*2.52*	*-1.29*	*5.90*	*-3.65*
	30 and over	*0.39*	*-2.37*	*-2.73*	*-0.53*	*0.64*	*-7.59*
Foreign Policy	18-29	-6.20	-4.51	6.79	-4.34	-4.25	-10.61
	30 and over	-2.47	-3.54	-0.78	-12.60	-12.87	-15.28
Economic Policy	18-29	20.76	-9.36	-9.25	-30.54	10.82	8.82
	30 and over	20.89	-5.98	-8.63	-19.00	13.35	9.64
Social Welfare	18-29	21.12	11.42	11.07	-1.46	11.18	-9.85
	30 and over	13.85	7.59	4.76	-4.25	-0.75	-9.10
Moral Issues	18-29	9.89	-16.99	-7.94	8.14	-4.76	-50.00
	30 and over	-2.35	-22.41	-2.94	-6.76	-15.00	-50.00
Energy and the Environment	18-29	38.10	15.31	41.30	7.89	28.57	25.00
	30 and over	32.10	10.83	42.42	-12.90	21.43	25.00
Other Domestic Issues	18-29	18.85	-18.18	14.42	8.65	8.57	7.78
	30 and over	24.74	-12.58	11.17	0.67	3.00	0.00
General Issue Comments	18-29	3.17	-17.20	-9.02	-8.20	14.38	-8.06
	30 and over	-2.89	-14.71	-21.51	-11.41	-8.54	-21.39
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*10.10*	*-5.79*	*3.07*	*-6.95*	*7.79*	*-4.28*
	30 and over	*8.15*	*-2.86*	*0.00*	*-8.08*	*0.17*	*-7.67*
Group Associations	*18-29*	*29.85*	*29.22*	*32.11*	*26.34*	*35.96*	*36.73*
	30 and over	*33.88*	*32.75*	*33.82*	*32.66*	*32.87*	*27.72*

favoring the Democrats and the negative valence for older Americans favoring Republicans for six years under study—2008, 2004, 2000, 1996, 1992, and 1980. This suggests one of two things. First, it is possible that issue ownership does not work very well for young people; perhaps young people do not think of the Republicans as better able to handle moral issues in the early 2000. This is a distinct possibility and would reflect their lack of attachment to the parties (and reliance on conditions and performance when evaluating party-handling capacities). More likely, however, this reflects their policy preferences, which substitute for performance assessments when there is no set policy. This would indicate that among young people for whom Moral Issues are salient, they generally preferred prospective Democratic performance on issues like abortion and gay marriage, while individuals over the age of 30 generally prefer the Republican Party's stances and future performance on these types of issues. If this is the case, GOP attempts to prime their issue handling advantages within the broader electorate might have hurt them with younger voters if voters use Moral Issue attitudes and assessments when making their vote choice (as will be discussed below). The age groups are also somewhat divided on General Issue comments, with the young preferring Democratic stances and performance and older Americans preferring Republican in 2004, 2000, 1996, 1992, and 1976. Finally, on Foreign Policy in 1984 and Energy and the Environment in 1980, 18-29-year-olds preferred Democrats when it came to prospective and retrospective assessments of party and candidate performance in these issue areas while adults over 30 generally favored the Republicans.

Valences were divided on certain candidate domains as well, including Personality, Trust, and Intelligence. Surprisingly, in the aggregate, 18-29-year-olds preferred John McCain's personality traits to Barack Obama's in 2008 while older people were more favorable to the Democratic candidate on this domain; similarly, the valence for young

people on the Personality domain suggested a preference for Republican George W. Bush in 2000 while older people preferred the personality traits of Al Gore that same election year. However, young people preferred Bill Clinton and older individuals preferred Bob Dole on candidate personality in 1996. In terms of candidate Trust, young people were more favorable to the Democratic candidates in both 2008 and 1984 and while older Americans were more favorable to the Republicans on this candidate domain. Finally, on candidate Intelligence, young people preferred the Republican in 1984 while older individuals preferred the Republican (though only marginally). The reverse was true in 1976 when the young held the Democratic candidate in higher esteem on this domain while older Americans favored the Republican.

Finally, we see division in aggregate valences on all party domains, particularly on Party Administration and Conduct. On the Party Administration and Conduct domain, the valence for young Americans favored the Democrats in 2000, 1996, 1992 and 1984 while the valences for individuals over the age of 30 favored the Republicans. There was only one year, 1980, for which older and younger people held distinct opinions on Party Affect where Republicans held a slight advantage among the young and Democrats a greater advantage among older individuals. Finally, when evaluating People in the Party, young people held Republicans in higher esteem in 1992 while Democrats were slightly advantaged among older individuals. The opposite was true in 2004 where the valence among young people strongly favored the Democrats, while the valence for People in the Party among older Americans strongly favored the Republicans.

NATIONAL CONTEXT AND ISSUE OWNERSHIP FROM 2004-2012

From 2004 to 2012, candidate and party perceptions for 18-29-year-olds and those over 30 are fairly comparable for many domains. But looking first at 2012, there are some

differences worth discussing in the candidate domains. There is a moderate disparity between 18-29-year-olds and older adults when assessing the Record and Performance of the candidates. While the valences for both age groups favor Obama with quite large magnitudes, there is over a 5-point difference between the valences where young people are even more favorable towards the Democratic candidate. But the differences in valence scores on all other candidate domains were smaller, and both age groups were favorable towards Obama on these domains with the exception of Experience and Management where the plurality of Pro-Republican comments for Mitt Romney pointed to his extensive business experience prior to his career in government.

Next, looking at the 2008 valences for candidate and party domains, young people appeared to trust Barack Obama more than older individuals, the latter of whom offered many more positive comments about John McCain and negative comments about Obama. Somewhat surprisingly, older individuals were collectively more positive towards Obama than the young were regarding candidate Personality, as comments by the young showed a slight preference for McCain. With the exception of Experience and Management, where both young and older Americans favored McCain the mass valences for the rest of the candidate and party domains young and older Americans alike favored the Democrats, though to varying degrees. In addition, there were at least ten-point gaps in the valences for Record and Performance and General Candidate Comments, where young people preferred Barack Obama to John McCain to a greater degree than those over 30.

A closer look at the 2004 valences show fewer domains where the age groups were on opposite sides in terms of candidate and party domains, with the exception of People in the Party where the difference was very large in magnitude (almost 30 points). There were also a few other notable differences in valences between young and older Americans worth mentioning. Both young and older Americans who mention Trust placed theirs in George

W. Bush, likely buoyed in the wake of 9/11. Young and old alike favored Kerry in terms of General Candidate Comments, but the valence for the young is over 13 points higher for the Democratic candidate.

However, the largest difference in valences between the age groups from 2004 to 2012 comes in the issues domains. For both age groups during this period, issue valences generally favored the Democrats, confirming H1—Democrats appear own or lease all issue areas for both age groups from 2004 to 2012, with the exception of Moral Issues for older adults. In fact, the shift to positive valences on Foreign Policy from 2004 to 2012, when compared to the negative valences on this issue for elections prior to 2004, indicate the Democrats earned a temporary "lease" on this issue area due to poor retrospective assessments of Republican performance on foreign affairs. While Democrats also had ownership on the Economic Policy domain from 2004 to 2012, this issue domain actually appears to be leased by Democrats long before the 2004 election, likely buoyed by the good economy during the Clinton administration (and the recession during George H.W. Bush's first term in office). Republicans do not appear to have had a lease on this issue since the Reagan administration in the 1980s.

In 2012, we see about 5-point disparities between older and younger Americans on the Foreign Policy, Social Welfare, and Energy and Environment domains where the valence scores for the young were more favorable to the Democratic candidate. Even larger 10-point disparities appear in the domains of Economic Policy and Other Domestic Issues, while there is a whopping 14-point disparity between young and older Americans on the Moral Issues domain. So even though the valences on all these issue areas were favorable to the Democratic Party and its candidate in 2012, young people held particularly favorable views relative to older individuals.

Looking next at 2008, large gaps (>10 points) existed between older and younger Americans with regards to Energy and the Environment and Other Domestic Issues. A 10-point difference existed between the age groups for Moral Issues as well, with individuals over 30 demonstrating a stronger valence favoring Republicans while the valence for young people was just marginally in favor of the Democrats. Both age groups show a strong preference for the Democrats in Foreign Policy and Social Welfare, though the valence for young people was moderately higher for both domains.

Issue valence differences were even more stark in 2004. The age groups were divided on Moral Issues and General Issue Comments, where the valence for older Americans demonstrated a preference for the Republicans and the valence for the young favored the Democrats. In fact, there was a 14-point difference in the valences between young and older Americans on Moral Issues. Both age groups preferred the Democrats for the rest of the issue domains, with rather large gaps (~10 points) in Social Welfare, Energy and the Environment, and Other Domestic Issues and a smaller gap (~7 points) in Foreign Policy.

When comparing these valences to the era prior to 2004, it is worth noting again that Republicans had a valence advantage for both age groups in Foreign Policy for all elections dating back to 1972, with the exception of 1984 when the valence for the young favored the Democrats. However, the shift in Foreign Policy valences favoring the Democrats since 2004 reveals that individuals of all ages were dissatisfied with the Republican handling of foreign policy issues during George W. Bush's tenure, which centered around terrorism after 9/11 and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, providing the Democrats with a "lease" on the issue area. Democrats also held a valence advantage in Economic Policy for most years for both age groups, except during the Reagan era (1980-1988), when Republican were favored by both age groups. This is particularly notable in

2008 and 2012, especially among the young those years, suggesting the Bush administration and the Republican Party were not seen as being able to handle that issue area in the wake of the Great Recession. Social Welfare valences also demonstrated a general preference for the Democrats except for 1980 and 1972 when Republicans held a slight advantage for both age groups (the age groups were divided in 1976). Democrats have fairly consistently held valence advantages for both age groups for Energy and the Environment and Other Domestic Issues, with the exception of 1980 when older Americans favored the Republicans for the former domain and 1988 when both age groups favored the Republicans in the latter.

On the whole, what these valences demonstrate is that the national context heavily favored the Democrats in the period from 2004 to 2012 in terms of national problems and perceptions of which party was better equipped to deal with those problems. This is particularly true among young people, who held stronger pro-Democratic (or anti-Republican) attitudes as reflected by the issue domain valences than older adults. We see this especially in 2004 on Foreign Policy, Social Welfare, Moral Issues, other Domestic Issues, and General Issue Comments. The differences between young and older adults were not as stark in 2008 but still existed, particularly on Foreign Policy, Moral Issues, Energy and the Environment, other Domestic Issues, and General Issue Comments. Finally, in 2012, we see the greatest differences in terms of Foreign Policy, Economic Policy, Social Welfare, Moral Issues, and Energy and the Environment.

LINKS TO THE VOTE DECISION

However, mass valences alone do not tell us which of these issue performance, candidate, and party assessments were actually the most salient and important to candidate choice each year. It could be that a domain with a large partisan valence is relatively

unimportant to candidate choice in an election year depending on the individual qualities of the candidates in the running and the salience of a particular issue on the national agenda, while small partisan valence advantages may be very important to the vote decision in other years. There may also be differences between the age groups in the importance of some candidate, party, or issue performance domains to vote choice, even in the same election year, due the less-rooted party predispositions of young people when compared to older individuals. Therefore, to measure the link between attitudes and candidate choice, individual-level valence scores for each domain are created and included as predictors in an individual-level model estimating the impact of each of these components on Democratic candidate preference.

Like in Chapter 4, I extend my analysis to include young nonvoters who indicate a preference for a candidate had they voted in the election and use candidate preference as my dependent variable rather than actual vote choice to maximize the number of cases included in the 18-29 year-old age group. It must be noted, however, that the 1972 and 1976 probit regressions use a different dependent variable than those used for 1980 through 2012. The dependent variables for 1980 on were created from post-election questions asking vote choice for voters and candidate preference for nonvoters. The 1972 and 1976 ANES do not include a candidate preference question in the post-election questionnaire for nonvoters, so the dependent variables for these years were created using vote choice from the post-election survey and intended vote choice pulled from the pre-election interview for those who said they did not vote in the post-election questionnaire. Because of this inconsistency, comparisons of the 1972 and 1976 results to the results for subsequent years should be made with caution.

Because the dependent variable is dichotomous candidate preference (coded 0=Republican; 1=Democrat), probit analysis estimated using maximum likelihood is

appropriate. This is preferable to using a multinomial logit model for two reasons. First, I am ultimately only interested in the D-R vote share each year. Second, there are so few third party voters in most years under study, particularly young third-party voters, that analyses including these individuals would be imprecise and uninformative. The model is as follows:

$$\Pr(y_i=1) = \Phi(\beta_0 + \Sigma\beta_k x_{ki})$$

where x is the value of respondent *i*'s valence on domain *k* (*k*=1…17). The individual-level partisan valences used as independent variables in the following probit analyses weight each variable (domain) by the number of comments made by each individual as follows: (positive Democratic comments+ negative Republican comments) – (positive Republican comments + negative Democratic comments).[36]

This model is not meant to be a comprehensive model of vote choice.[37] The interest here is in testing the link between short-term factors like national conditions and context—particularly retrospective and prospective assessments of party and candidate performance on important national problems—and candidate choice, and to determine if those factors impact candidate choice differently from older individuals who have more crystallized party predispositions. Even though party identification is not included as a distinct independent variable in the model, it is proxied into the model through the pro- and anti-party comments in the three party domains. In fact, one may even interpret the individual valence scores on these party domains as partisanship, with negative values suggesting Republican partisanship and positive Democratic partisanship. Lower negative numbers

[36] This is also sometimes referred to as an "ambivalence" measure (Albertson, Brehm, and Alvarez 2005)
[37] Demographic variables aside from age are not included in these models, so these models are unweighted to maintain consistency since weights were not included in surveys prior to 1992.

and higher positive numbers suggest stronger partisan inclinations, while values closer to zero indicate more moderate positions.

The resulting probit coefficients are then transformed into standardized probit coefficients[38], indicating the magnitude of the effect of each domain on vote choice. Standardized coefficients are useful to compare the relative importance of domains across elections, and have been shown to be very effective in predicting people's votes (Kessel 2004, 75). A one-standard deviation increase in the independent variable x_k is expected to change *y* by the number of standard deviations expressed by the standardized probit coefficient, holding all other variables constant. Larger standardized coefficients suggest those domains are more important in determining the value of the independent variable, candidate choice. For example, if the Democrats' largest valence advantage among the young is in the Social Welfare domain in an election year, but the standardized probit coefficient is not statistically significant (as was the case in 1996), the Democratic valence advantage is neutralized by having no impact on the vote that election.

PROBIT RESULTS

Party Domains

The seventeen-predictor models provide interesting insight into the nature and dynamics of presidential elections since 1972 (Tables 5.4A through 5.4C). First, it should be noted that party-related domains do not as frequently impact the vote choice of young people as they do older people, confirming H3. Both Party Administration and Conduct

[38] These are calculated by multiplying the probit coefficients by the ratio of the standard deviation of the independent variable (a particular domain) by the standard deviation of the dependent variable (candidate choice) for each age group for each year. With full standardization, both the x_k variables and y_i* (the latent candidate choice variable for respondent *i*) are transformed to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1, allowing for comparison across elections.

Table 5.4A: Standardized Probit Coefficients – Effects on Democratic Vote by Age, 1996-2012

	18-29-year-olds					***30 and Over***				
Domain	*2012*	*2008*	*2004*	*2000*	*1996*	*2012*	*2008*	*2004*	*2000*	*1996*
Candidates										
Record-Performance	.151*	--	.121*	--	--	.125***	.094***	.143***	--	.188***
Experience-Mgmt	.232***	.198***	--	--	--	.137***	.228***	.073*	.089***	.12***
Trust	.160*	--	.251*	--	.331**	.099**	.094***	.224***	.137***	.272***
Intelligence	--	.167*	--	.344*	--	--	.106***	.1**	.109***	.06*
Personality	--	--	--	--	--	--	.075**	.169***	.08**	.056*
General Candidate	.192**	.201**	.162**	.315**	--	.163***	.177***	.216***	.152***	.155***
Parties										
Party Admin-Conduct	--	.148*	--	--	--	.147***	.075**	--	.107***	.096*
Party Affect	--	--	.175**	.468**	--	.116***	.202***	.1**	.221***	.206***
People in the Party	--	--	--	--	NA	--	--	--	--	--
Issues										
Foreign Policy	.266***	.262***	.417***	--	--	.138***	.132***	.234***	.109***	--
Economic Policy	.313***	.142*	.225*	--	.188*	.192***	.232***	.199***	.216***	.143***
Social Welfare	.213**	.253**	--	--	--	.179***	.108***	--	.111***	.118***
Moral Issues	.186**	.18*	--	.358***	.269*	.168***	.136***	.094**	.142***	.213***
Environment-Energy	--	--	--	--	--	--	.065**	--	.107***	--
Other Domestic Issues	--	.183*	--	--	.272*	.065*	.055*	--	.15***	.062*
General Issue	--	.141*	--	--	--	.176***	.176***	.087*	.096***	.21***
Group Associations	.144*	--	.278*	--	--	.145***	.128***	.141***	.198***	.089**
N	359	324	180	185	160	1319	1543	799	1176	1125
Pseudo R^2	.601	.527	.69	.442	.607	.607	.574	.65	.595	.63
Log Likelihood	-76.85	-80.51	-36.25	-70.47	-38.45	-323.13	-416	-191.72	-329.83	-276.62
% correctly predicted	92.48%	91.36%	88.89%	80.54%	91.25%	91.89%	88.08%	90.49%	88.78%	90.31%

*Notes: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, -- = not significant at the .05 level, NA=Variable not included/too few cases for analysis*

Table 5.4B: Standardized Probit Coefficients – Effects on Democratic Vote by Age, 1980-1992

	18-29-year-olds				***30 and Over***			
Domain	*1992*	*1988*	*1984*	*1980*	*1992*	*1988*	*1984*	*1980*
Candidates								
Record-Performance	.375***	--	.217***	.134*	.10***	--	.186***	.176***
Experience-Mgmt	.168**	.175*	.121**	.268***	.19***	.179***	.116***	.145***
Trust	--	--	.101*	--	.122***	.087**	.107***	.092**
Intelligence	--	.125*	.164***	--	.098***	--	.083***	--
Personality	.154*	--	--	--	--	--	.058*	.139***
General Candidate	--	.146**	.121**	--	.112***	.026***	.173***	.102***
Parties								
Party Admin-Conduct	.152*	--	.11*	.17*	.087***	.1***	.115***	.093**
Party Affect	--	--	--	.18**	.118***	.171***	.135***	.101**
People in the Party	--	.227**	--	--	--	--	.078**	--
Issues								
Foreign Policy	.112*	.328***	.3***	.321***	.173***	.2***	.185***	.299***
Economic Policy	.202***	.3***	.383***	.28***	.197***	.168***	.308***	.199***
Social Welfare	--	--	--	--	.12***	.182***	.093***	.121**
Moral Issues	.259***	--	.138*	--	.247***	.165***	--	--
Environment-Energy	.232**	--	--	--	.072*	.05*	--	--
Other Domestic Issues	--	.205***	.165**	--	--	.09**	.076**	.105**
General Issue	.19*	.131*	--	--	.172***	.105***	.096**	.109**
Group Associations	.164*	.198***	.112**	--	.161***	.235***	.154***	.211***
N	294	322	413	283	1413	1240	1339	862
Pseudo R^2	.591	.456	.572	.428	.6	.534	.609	.523
Log Likelihood	-78.52	-120.57	-120.45	-110.89	-383.67	-399.24	-353.62	-283.58
% correctly predicted	86.73%	81.06%	85.71%	81.27%	89.38%	86.53%	89.02%	86.43%

*Notes: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, -- = not significant at the .05 level, NA=Variable not included/too few cases for analysis*

Table 5.4C: Standardized Probit Coefficients – Effects on Democratic Vote by Age, 1972-1976

	18-29-year-olds		***30 and Over***	
Domain	*1976*	*1972*	*1976*	*1972*
Candidates				
Record-Performance	--	.134*	.204***	.135***
Experience-Mgmt	.258***	.115*	.205***	.093**
Trust	.269***	.142**	.181***	.218***
Intelligence	--	.191***	.101***	.084*
Personality	.17***	.194***	.062**	.11**
General Candidate	.182***	.116*	.136***	.205***
Parties				
Party Admin-Conduct	--	--	.103***	--
Party Affect	.125*	.173**	.227***	.111***
People in the Party	--	--	--	.073*
Issues				
Foreign Policy	--	.215***	.081***	.192***
Economic Policy	.235***	--	.193***	.084**
Social Welfare	.126*	--	.071*	.082**
Moral Issues	--	NA	--	NA
Environment-Energy	--	--	--	--
Other Domestic Issues	--	.204**	.064*	--
General Issue	--	.242***	.114***	.179***
Group Associations	.16**	.187***	.16***	.216***
N	513	670	1493	1779
Pseudo R^2	.423	.254	.531	.27
Log Likelihood	-200.75	-342.78	-485.56	-816.15
Chi-square	p<.001	p<.001	p<.001	p<.001
% correctly predicted	83.24%	83.73%	86.87%	87.70%

*Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, --= not significant at the .05 level, NA=Variable not included/too few cases for analysis*

and Party Affect have a statistically significant impact on the vote choice of older Americans for every year under study except 2004 and 1972. During those two election years, Party Administration and Conduct was not statistically significant. In addition, the People in the Party domain had a statistically significant impact on the vote of older Americans in 1984 and 1972, while it only had an impact on candidate choice for 18-29-year-olds in 1988. This lends credence to the idea that the more crystallized partisanship of older Americans might temper the effects of short-term forces compared to the latter's impact on younger individuals.

Despite positive and favorable valences for Democrats from 2004 to 2012, party domains only sporadically affected candidate choice for young people. In 2012, no party-related domains had a statistically significant effect for young people, consistent with the idea that young people are less attached to the parties in terms of both identification or affect. Party Administration and Conduct was statistically significant in 2008, likely due to fewer positive assessments of Republican Party performance during the Bush administration (Table 5.7 in Appendix B). Party Affect was statistically significant in 2004 for 18-29-year-olds as well. Combined with the positive Democratic valences on these domains, the statistical significance of these party domains do suggest a considerable Democratic advantage in these areas among young people.

Looking back to the era prior to 2004, Party Affect had a statistically significant and quite substantive effect on candidate choice for 18-29-year-olds in 2000, and was the first election that Party Affect influenced candidate choice since 1980. The positive valence in 2000 also indicates young people were quite positive in affect towards the Democrats. Party Affect was also statistically significant in 1976 and 1972. Party Administration and Conduct had an impact on candidate choice for a few election years in the pre-2004 era, and was statistically significant in 1992, 1984, and 1980. But to reiterate, both of these

party-related domains regularly affected the candidate preference of older people in most years under study.

Candidate Domains

Looking next at candidate domains in the 2004-2012 era, we see that in 2012, Record and Performance, Experience and Management, Trust, and General Candidate Comments had statistically significant effects on candidate choice for both young and older Americans that election year. In 2008, while every single candidate domain had a statistically significant impact on candidate choice for individuals over the age of 30, only Experience and Management, Intelligence, and General Candidate Comments affected candidate preference for young people. Finally, in 2004, every single candidate domain impacted candidate preference for older people while only Record and Performance, Trust, and General Candidate Comments had a statistically significant effect on the young.

Issue Domains

Looking next at issue domains for the period from 2004 to 2012, remember, every single issue domain had a positive (and thus pro-Democratic) valence among young people. Most of these valences were positive for older Americans as well, with the exception of Moral Values in 2004 and 2008 and General Issue Comments in 2004. The probit results for 2012 indicate that only Foreign Policy, Economic Policy, Social Welfare, and Moral Issues had a statistically significant impact on the candidate choice of young people. Unsurprisingly, in the wake of the Great Recession, Economic Policy had the greatest impact, followed by Foreign Policy, then Social Welfare Issues, followed by Moral Issues. Among older Americans, these four issue domains were also statistically significant along with Other Domestic Issues and General Issue Comments.

The probit results for 2008 demonstrate that many more issue domains had a statistically significant impact on candidate preference among individuals over the age of 30 relative to younger Americans that year. But for the issue domains that were statistically significant among young people, the magnitude of the effects tended to be large. With the 2008 election occurring in the midst of the Great Recession, Economic Policy was statistically significant for both age groups, and had the greatest relative impact on vote choice for older Americans that year. Foreign Policy, Social Welfare, Moral Issues, and Other Domestic Issues all had statistically-significant effects on vote choice of young people that year. Foreign Policy actually had the greatest impact of any domain for young people that year, followed by Social Welfare Issues, and then General Candidate comments. Given the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, along with Barack Obama's campaign promises for national health insurance, it is unsurprising these issue domains were salient and impactful for the young in that election.

The effects of salient short-term forces were particularly noticeable in 2004 among young people. While Foreign Policy, Economic Policy, Moral Issues, and General Issue Comments had a statistically significant impact on the vote of older individuals in 2004, only the Foreign Policy and Economic Policy domains had statistically significant effects on the young. However, Foreign Policy not only had the single greatest impact on the vote of the young that year, with the war in Iraq in full force, that domain had the single greatest magnitude of effect on candidate preference among any issue domain for the young across all years under study.

Effects of Short-Term Forces Prior to 2004

Moving next to my second hypothesis, were issue attitudes and candidate assessments among the young a stronger predictor of candidate choice from 2004 to 2012

when compared to prior elections (1980 to 2000)? The evidence on this is dubious. First looking at candidate domains in Tables 5.4A and 5.4B, a larger number of candidate domains appear to influence candidate choice among 18-29-year-olds from 2004 to 2012 when compared to the immediately-preceding low-salience elections of 1996 and 2000. But when looking all the way back to 1980, a number of candidate domains do appear to affect the candidate choice of young Americans in many elections and at quite large magnitudes. Candidate Experience and Management appears to frequently affect candidate preference, and was statistically significant in all years except 2004, 2000, and 1996. The magnitude of these effects also varied greatly by election year, with the strongest effects in 2012, 2008, and 1980. The General Candidate Comments domain also often had a statistically significant impact on the candidate preference of young people and was only insignificant in 1996, 1992, and 1980. It had an effect of the greatest magnitude in 2000. Personality is the candidate domain that least frequently impacts candidate choice among young people from 1980 to 2012 and was only statistically significant in 1992. All other candidate domains had sporadic effects over this time period, varying by election year. This provides evidence to reject H2—candidate assessments do not appear to have a greater impact on the vote choice of young people from 2004 to 2012 relative to elections prior to 2004.

There is also little evidence to support H2 on the issue domains. Issue assessments do not appear to have a greater impact, both in terms of magnitude and number of issue areas, on candidate choice in the period from 2004 to 2012 relative to the earlier era. While six of the seven issue areas do appear to impact the vote choice of young people in 2008, and five of the seven in 2012, there were many issues influencing candidate preference in 1992 and 1984. And while Foreign Policy in 2004 had the largest impact on candidate choice for any issue domain for all years under study, it also had a relatively large impact

in the 1980s as well. The same can be said for Economic Policy—while it had a substantial effect on candidate choice for young people in 2012, the magnitude of effects on candidate choice were quite strong during the Reagan era as well.

1972 and 1976: A Companion Era

Because of the methodological issues with creating the dependent variables for 1976 and 1972, I did not think it prudent to directly include these election years in my over-time comparisons. But this is an interesting companion era to the 2004-2012 period for a few reasons. Older Baby Boomers socialized into politics during an equally turbulent period, with the nation facing major issues like the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War in the 1960s and '70s, followed by the Watergate scandal. These issues caught public attention, penetrated into the personal lives of citizens, and perhaps fostered a greater use of performance issue assessments as criteria for vote choice (Delli Carpini 1986; Zukin et al. 2006). In fact, older Boomers who came of age in this era demonstrated a greater increase in liberal attitudes than older voting cohorts did in the aftermath of the Vietnam War (Davis 2004; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1979) and were more Independent and less partisan than they had been in previous decades (Beck 1975, 14-16). However, it was difficult to attribute blame for the Vietnam War to any one party since the initial engagement began during a Republican presidency but the draft and high casualty counts occurred while a Democrat was in office. Nonetheless, the coming-of-political-age experience of older Baby Boomers was similar to the experience of Millennials in many ways. This also provides a way to test the generalizability of my theory that national conditions and context can raise the salience of performance issues and candidate factors, and that these short-term factors should have a stronger impact during periods of political turbulence compared to times of relative quiescence.

The standardized probit coefficients for 1972 and 1976 are reported in Table 5.4C. Looking first at the party domains, we see that Party Affect had a statistically significant effect on candidate preference for both young and older Americans in those election cycles. But Party Administration and Conduct was also statistically significant for older Americans in 1976, as was People in the Party in 1972, demonstrating that party-related factors do seem to enter the candidate choice calculus of older people more frequently than for younger people, especially in times of turbulence, and once again confirming H3.

Looking next at the candidate domains, we can see that every single candidate domain had a statistically significant effect on the vote for both age groups in 1972, and for older Americans in 1976. In 1976, Experience and Management, Trust, Personality, and General Candidate Comments significantly impacted the vote choice of young people while fewer candidate-related factors entered the vote equation in subsequent election years. Therefore, these results mostly support H4—candidate factors do appear to affect the vote of young Americans to a greater extent during the turbulent elections of the 1970s.

There is also evidence to support H4 in the issue domains. While fewer issue domains had a statistically significant impact on youth candidate preference in this era than for older Americans, every single issue domain that was statistically significant for young people had strong effects on their candidate preference. Foreign policy, unsurprisingly, had a strongest effect on youth candidate choice than among older American in 1972 in the height of the Vietnam War, though Other Domestic Issues and General Issue Comments also had effects of similar magnitudes. In 1976, while only Economic Policy and Social Welfare Issues were statistically significant for young people, the magnitude of their effects were quite large, especially on the Economic Policy domain. Thus, these results not only confirm my fourth hypothesis, they also provide some credibility to my theory. Party

factors do not appear to affect young voters as frequently as older voters, especially in times of turbulence.

POTENCY—AN ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS

The following analysis is not relevant to my hypotheses, but it is interesting to explore nonetheless. Both partisan valence forces and domain importance (as demonstrated by the size of the standardized coefficients) work together to have combined effects (Kessel 2004). Kessel suggests using *potency* as a heuristic to develop an idea of how they work together by multiplying the aggregate partisan valence for each domain by its standardized probit coefficient since a domain can only swing the vote to a candidate if the valence favors that candidate and the coefficient is large. While potency is not a statistical measure, it can provide a quick impression of how much and in what direction a domain affects vote choice. It also allows for a non-statistical comparison of effects among domains within each election year.

Patterns can logically be ascertained by considering the values of both the valence and standardized coefficient of a domain. A domain with an insignificant standardized probit coefficient would not exert any influence on the vote, no matter the value of the valence of that domain. A domain with a very large coefficient but an aggregate valence close to zero would result in equilibrium close to neutral, with neither candidate holding a major advantage on that domain. Fairly extreme valences (further from zero), combined with small standardized coefficients, would suggest a small relative advantage for the candidate favored by the direction of the valence; extreme valences combined with moderately sized coefficients result in a larger relative advantage for the favored candidate. But relatively extreme valences combined with large standardized coefficients suggest that voters were moved by strong forces with considerable advantages for one candidate over

the other. As such, potencies are an easy way to summarize these patterns, with values close to zero indicating equilibrium close to neutral. Higher positive potency values suggest stronger advantages for the Democratic candidate, while lower negative values indicate a greater advantage for the Republican.

By looking at potency values, we can get a relative sense of which domains both favored one candidate over the other, and which truly moved vote choice. In addition, the *absolute difference* between the potency values of young and older adults provides a clue as to which domains moved one age group more than the other in favor of a candidate. Tables 5.5A through 5.5C provide the values of these potencies and absolute differences for each election.

First looking at 2012, we see that Group Associations, Economic Policy, General Candidate Comments, Candidate Trust, Social Welfare, and Moral Issues had the highest potency rates of all domains for young people, and all of these favored the Democrats. When considering the absolute difference in potency rates between young and older Americans on these domains, however, Economic Policy, Moral Issues, and Party Affect appear to have the greatest differences between young and older individuals. This suggests that these domains may best explain any differences in candidate preference between young and older voters that year. The absolute differences on the domains of Economic Policy, Moral Issues, and Party Affect point to the idea that these domains might have differentially impacted young and older Americans in 2012, with Economic Policy and Moral Issues having a stronger effect on the vote choice of young people while Party Affect had a strong impact on the vote choice of older Americans (and had no statistically significant effect on the vote choice of younger Americans) that year.

Table 5.5A: Potencies and Absolute Differences, 1996 to 2012

		2012		2008		2004		2000		1996	
Domain	*Age Group*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*
Record and Performance	18-29	3.27		0.00		-0.24		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	2.02	*1.25*	1.48	*1.48*	-0.39	*0.15*	0.00	*0.00*	3.03	*3.03*
Experience and Management	18-29	-2.36		-2.29		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	-1.36	*1.00*	-4.08	*1.79*	-0.13	*0.13*	0.88	*0.88*	-1.20	*1.20*
Trust	18-29	3.92		0.00		0.00		0.00		-9.86	
	30 and over	2.01	*1.92*	-0.90	*0.90*	-2.16	*2.16*	-2.22	*2.22*	-10.06	*0.20*
Intelligence	18-29	0.00		4.28		0.00		4.63		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	2.84	*1.45*	1.77	*1.77*	1.76	*2.87*	1.52	*1.52*
Personality	18-29	0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	0.49	*0.49*	-5.07	*5.07*	0.22	*0.22*	-0.04	*0.04*
Gen. Candidate Comments	18-29	4.40		4.53		2.70		-1.05		0.00	
	30 and over	3.10	*1.29*	2.53	*2.01*	0.75	*1.95*	-1.17	*0.12*	2.09	*2.09*
Party Admin. and Conduct	18-29	0.00		1.26		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	1.62	*1.62*	0.49	*0.76*	0.00	*0.00*	-0.30	*0.30*	-0.42	*0.42*
Party Affect	18-29	0.00		0.00		2.77		5.28		0.00	
	30 and over	2.51	*2.51*	4.15	*4.15*	0.83	*1.94*	2.19	*3.09*	1.88	*1.88*
People in the Party	18-29	0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	0.00	*0.00*	0.00	*0.00*	0.00	*0*	0.00	*0.00*
Foreign Policy	18-29	1.54		5.12		6.29		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.16	*1.38*	1.96	*3.16*	1.95	*4.34*	-1.70	*1.70*	0.00	*0.00*
Economic Policy	18-29	4.60		2.42		2.58		0.00		0.59	
	30 and over	0.82	*3.79*	4.26	*1.84*	1.59	*0.99*	0.18	*0.18*	0.98	*0.39*
Social Welfare	18-29	3.26		4.84		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	1.89	*1.37*	1.63	*3.22*	0.00	*0.00*	0.09	*0.09*	0.78	*0.78*
Moral Issues	18-29	3.02		0.07		0.00		0.72		1.89	
	30 and over	0.37	*2.64*	-1.38	*1.45*	-0.15	*0.15*	-0.29	*1.01*	-1.09	*2.97*
Energy and the Environment	18-29	0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	1.08	*1.08*	0.00	*0.00*	2.02	*2.02*	0.00	*0.00*
Other Domestic Issues	18-29	0.00		3.43		0.00		0.00		3.04	
	30 and over	1.26	*1.26*	0.14	*3.29*	0.00	*0.00*	0.47	*0.47*	0.43	*2.61*
General Issue Comments	18-29	0.00		2.05		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	1.02	*1.02*	1.67	*0.38*	-0.82	*0.82*	-1.30	*1.30*	-0.43	*0.43*
Group Associations	18-29	5.77		0.00		9.86		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	5.35	*0.42*	4.77	*4.77*	4.66	*5.20*	5.67	*5.67*	2.75	*2.75*

Table 5.5B: Potencies and Absolute Differences, 1980 to 1992

		1992		1988		1984		1980	
Domain	*Age Group*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*
Record and Performance	18-29	4.85		0.00		-5.38		1.02	
	30 and over	1.14	*3.71*	0.00	*0.00*	-3.40	*1.98*	1.51	*0.48*
Experience and Management	18-29	-2.66		-1.94		-1.29		-0.90	
	30 and over	-2.95	*0.29*	-2.88	*0.94*	-1.29	*0.00*	-1.25	*0.34*
Trust	18-29	0.00		0.00		0.30		0.00	
	30 and over	-1.31	*1.31*	0.81	*0.81*	-0.09	*0.39*	1.14	*1.14*
Intelligence	18-29	0.00		1.50		-0.64		0.00	
	30 and over	1.54	*1.54*	0.00	*1.50*	0.01	*0.66*	0.00	*0.00*
Personality	18-29	-1.98		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*1.98*	0.00	*0.00*	-1.47	*1.47*	-1.26	*1.26*
Gen. Candidate Comments	18-29	0.00		0.21		0.84		0.00	
	30 and over	0.88	*0.88*	0.07	*0.14*	0.01	*0.83*	1.20	*1.20*
Party Admin. and Conduct	18-29	0.42		0.00		0.19		-0.18	
	30 and over	-0.19	*0.62*	-0.80	*0.80*	-0.66	*0.85*	-0.50	*0.32*
Party Affect	18-29	0.00		0.00		0.00		-0.31	
	30 and over	1.48	*1.48*	1.80	*1.80*	2.64	*2.64*	1.55	*1.86*
People in the Party	18-29	0.00		-0.83		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	0.00	*0.83*	-1.03	*1.03*	0.00	*0.00*
Foreign Policy	18-29	-0.69		-1.48		2.04		-1.39	
	30 and over	-0.43	*0.27*	-0.71	*0.77*	-0.14	*2.18*	-3.77	*2.38*
Economic Policy	18-29	4.19		-2.81		-3.54		-8.55	
	30 and over	4.11	*0.08*	-1.00	*1.80*	-2.66	*0.89*	-3.78	*4.77*
Social Welfare	18-29	0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	1.66	*1.66*	1.38	*1.38*	0.44	*0.44*	-0.51	*0.51*
Moral Issues	18-29	2.56		0.00		-1.10		0.00	
	30 and over	-0.58	*3.14*	-3.70	*3.70*	0.00	*1.10*	0.00	*0.00*
Energy and the Environment	18-29	8.84		0.00		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	2.31	*6.53*	0.54	*0.54*	0.00	*0.00*	0.00	*0.00*
Other Domestic Issues	18-29	0.00		-3.73		2.38		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	-1.13	*2.60*	0.85	*1.53*	0.07	*0.07*
General Issue Comments	18-29	0.60		-2.25		0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	-0.50	*1.10*	-1.55	*0.71*	-2.06	*2.06*	-1.24	*1.24*
Group Associations	18-29	4.90		5.79		3.60		0.00	
	30 and over	5.45	*0.56*	7.70	*1.91*	5.21	*1.61*	6.89	*6.89*

Table 5.5C: Potencies and Absolute Differences, 1972 and 1976

		1976		1972	
Domain	*Age Group*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*	*Potency*	*Abs Diff*
Record and Performance	18-29	0.00		-2.65	
	30 and over	1.14	*1.14*	-3.72	*1.07*
Experience and Management	18-29	-2.36		-3.61	
	30 and over	-2.99	*0.62*	-2.78	*0.83*
Trust	18-29	-1.02		2.13	
	30 and over	-1.87	*0.85*	1.34	*0.79*
Intelligence	18-29	0.00		-5.34	
	30 and over	-0.27	*0.27*	-2.94	*2.39*
Personality	18-29	-2.05		-5.54	
	30 and over	-0.47	*1.58*	-3.70	*1.84*
Gen. Candidate Comments	18-29	1.61		-0.89	
	30 and over	0.31	*1.30*	-4.10	*3.20*
Party Admin. and Conduct	18-29	0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	-0.78	*0.78*	0.00	*0.00*
Party Affect	18-29	3.39		3.84	
	30 and over	3.98	*0.59*	1.45	*2.40*
People in the Party	18-29	0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	-1.62	*1.62*
Foreign Policy	18-29	0.00		-2.28	
	30 and over	-1.04	*1.04*	-2.93	*0.65*
Economic Policy	18-29	2.54		0.00	
	30 and over	2.58	*0.03*	0.81	*0.81*
Social Welfare	18-29	1.41		0.00	
	30 and over	-0.05	*1.46*	-0.75	*0.75*
Moral Issues	18-29	0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	0.00	*0.00*
Energy and the Environment	18-29	0.00		0.00	
	30 and over	0.00	*0.00*	0.00	*0.00*
Other Domestic Issues	18-29	0.00		1.59	
	30 and over	0.19	*0.19*	0.00	*1.59*
General Issue Comments	18-29	0.00		-1.95	
	30 and over	-0.97	*0.97*	-3.83	*1.88*
Group Associations	18-29	5.75		6.87	
	30 and over	5.26	*0.49*	5.99	*0.88*

Note: Positive potencies favor the Democrats; negative potencies favor Republicans

Looking next at 2008, we see that Foreign Policy, Social Welfare, General Candidate Comments, Candidate Intelligence, and Other Domestic Issues had the highest potency rates of all the domains among young people, and all favored the Democrats. But a glance at the absolute differences shows that the factors that may best explain vote choice differences between young and older Americans are Party Affect, Group Associations, Foreign Policy, Social Welfare, and other Domestic Issues. But it is apparent from the potency rates that the differences in the first two domains, Party Affect and Group Associations, stem solely from the potency rates of those over 30 as these two domains had no effect on the vote choice of the young that year.

In 2004, the strongest Democratic potency rates for the young were in Foreign Policy and Group Associations. These two domains also had the largest difference scores that year, along with candidate Personality. But looking once more at potency for Personality, it seems that Personality had no effect on the vote choice of the young, and only factored highly in the candidate choice of older individuals. In all, the potency and difference rates between young and older Americans do support the idea that divergences in Foreign Policy, Economic Policy, and to a lesser extent Moral Issue assessments between young and older Americans may have had differential effects on the vote between the two age groups in the years that the age gap in vote choice was apparent.

DISCUSSION

I use open-ended party and candidate likes/dislikes data in the above analyses, which allow me to consider a range of contextual factors and assess their impact on the voting behavior of younger versus older individuals. These open-ended responses reflect the national context and circumstances in an election year, highlighting the national

problems that are salient to voters and illustrating differences in assessments of candidate- and party-competence in handling those issues.

The results presented above indicate that Foreign Policy and Economic Policy were among the most important factors influencing the candidate preference of young people in elections between 2004 and 2012. With the exception of candidate Experience and Management, the pro-Democratic valences for all other candidate and issue domains that had a statistically significant impact on candidate choice among the young demonstrate that the national context and circumstances were incredibly pro-Democratic those years, signifying that Democrats either owned or had a temporary lease on these issue areas as perceived by young people. In addition, disagreement with the Republican Party on Moral Issues provides another potential reason for estrangement from the GOP among 18-29-year-olds in recent elections.

The magnitude of the standardized coefficients on candidate and issue domains suggest that performance issue assessments, along with candidate factors, may account for the age gap in vote choice in the elections from 2004 and 2012 as young both young and older people retrospectively assessed Republican performance on these issues and thought Democrats could better handle the job. While older Americans have stronger party predispositions and party affect that help temper these short-term forces impacting candidate choice, young people from 2004 through 2012 lacked the same stabilizing forces and were thus more susceptible to the short-term factors. Very salient, critical issues like the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and the economic recession moved 18-29-year-olds strongly in the direction of the Democrats as they were repelled by Republican Party and its performance on these large national issues. This is consistent with generational theory,

which suggests that critical period events like wars and recession shape the attitudes and party attachments of cohorts of young voters coming into political age, while the more crystallized predispositions of older voters inhibit such strong movement. The elections from 2004 to 2012 were prime examples of the behavioral consequences of such attitude shifts. However, once these large national problems are resolved, young people once again return to their traditional patterns thinking and behaving like everyone else.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The goal of this dissertation was to explain the cause for the age gap in vote choice we observed between 2004 and 2012—an unusual phenomenon that had not been present in prior decades—to determine when we may see such differences in behavior occur again. I posited that young people are more susceptible to the short-term forces affecting campaigns and elections—namely national context, issues, and candidates—due to their malleable partisan preferences, particularly in times of political turbulence. Older Americans, with more crystallized partisan attachments and better-defined political predispositions, are not as easily moved by national conditions and the short-term forces impacting politics.

In times of relative political quiescence, young people usually do not pay much attention to nor engage much with politics and instead simply exaggerate the tendencies of the rest of the electorate, receiving only the "loudest shouts" from the political world. However, the prevailing national conditions from 2004 to 2012 made politics salient to young people as the problems facing the nation—like the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the economic recession—were problems that directly touched the lives of young people, leading to a performance issue-driven shift in attitudes and opinions about candidate and party competency in handling the major problems facing the country. The attitudes and behavior of older Americans were not as moved by these winds of change due to their more deeply-rooted predispositions including party identification. In the future, I expect we might see another age gap in vote choice when one party's competency is questioned on the large salient problems facing the nation that directly affect young people, particularly on performance issues like foreign policy. In fact, it would not be unreasonable to assume

that another major war with a large commitment of troop would be a catalyst for young people to engage with politics to a greater degree than usual, and that perceptions of party competency would influence the voting behavior of young people to a greater degree than older Americans.

REVIEW OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

This dissertation started with an introduction to the puzzling age gap in vote choice we observed from 2004 to 2012. I included a literature review in Chapter 2 that discussed the theoretical and empirical framework that underpins this research. It first reviewed what we know about young people—that they are generally uninterested and uninvolved with politics, how they develop their initial political beliefs, and how those processes of socialization may be disrupted by large national events in times of political turbulence. I then discussed some of the existing theories of vote choice and how they inform our understanding of youth voting behavior. I note how most of these theories do include the effects of political context on the vote, allowing me to develop my own theory incorporating political context to explain the voting behavior of young people from 2004 to 2012 and why it might differ from that of older adults.

In Chapter 3, I first examined the conventional wisdom political pundits and journalists used to explain the age gap in vote choice—that young people simply liked the Democratic Party and its candidates than older people, were identifying more as Democrats, and were simply voting based on their party identification. I found that this is not the case. Instead, using measures of affective polarization and performing a series of difference-of-means tests, I found that affective polarization is more prevalent among older partisans than among younger Americans. Young people are generally less attached to the

parties than their over-30 counterparts both in terms of identification and affect. This is consistent with my theory that older people, in the aggregate, have deeper-rooted partisan attachments that would render them less susceptible to the short-term forces affecting campaigns like the national context, performance issue assessments, and candidate qualities than younger Americans.

These findings provided support for my proposition that long-term factors like party identification may factor into the candidate preference decisions of young people as frequently as they do for older people, and that short-term forces may matter more in times of political turbulence—periods during which we might expect young people to actually pay attention to politics. This led me to examine the effects of prospective issue proximities on the vote choice of young people relative to older Americans in Chapter 4.

Given the debate as to whether citizens have polarized on substantive policy issues (e.g. Abramowitz 2010, Fiorina et al. 2005), in Chapter 4 I first examine the aggregate means for self-placement and candidate placement on a series of 7-point issue scales—measuring attitudes about government spending and services, defense spending, national health insurance, government job guarantees, government aid to blacks, and environmental policy vs. jobs—for both 18-29-year-olds and individuals over 30 for every year from 1996 to 2016. I find that, in the aggregate, 18-29-year-olds are consistently more liberal than older adults on all issues for all years under study; however, there not much evidence to suggest young people have grown more liberal over time. Both young and older Americans do recognize a difference in the candidates' stands, and these perceptions of where candidates stand on substantive issues have grown more polarized over time.

I also find that while young people were proximally closer to Democratic candidates on most issues in recent elections, it was only on the issue of defense spending in 2004 that these issue proximities had a very strong impact on the vote. While other prospective issue proximities may have had an effect on candidate choice as well, like government job guarantees in 2012, it is unclear whether this was due to projection or if young people truly knew where the candidates stood on these issues. Surprisingly, it appears that older Americans may be more prone to projection, particularly on low salience-issues in low-salience election years.

Chapter 5 was my capstone chapter, looking at the substantive liberalism of young adults rooted in salience. It utilized ANES open-ended party- and candidate likes-dislikes data from 1972 to 2012 to identify references to extant circumstances and candidate-and party-performance on salient national problems. It incorporated long-term party factors, short-term candidate factors, and both prospective and retrospective assessments of candidate and party performance on salient issues into a single model of vote choice. While these data were pre-coded by the ANES for 1972-2004, I took on the massive task of hand coding these open-ended data for 2008 and 2012.

Using these data had a twofold purpose. First, open-ended responses allow a researcher to gain a better understanding as to the relative salience of party, candidate, and issue factors in any given election year. Second, these data allow for comparison across election years to determine whether salient short-term factors have a greater effect in more politically turbulent periods in politics among young people. I measured partisan valences on a number of party, candidate, and issue domains and find that from 2004 to 2012, national conditions favored the Democrats who held an ownership advantage on most issue

areas, particularly on foreign policy and economic issues. Young people held opinions that were much more favorable to the Democrats on these issue areas compared to older Americans, along with moral issue attitudes. Probit models using individual-level valences on these candidate, party, and issue domains demonstrated that among the candidate and issue domains were salient to young people from 2004 to 2012, and that party domains factored into the vote much more often for older Americans in all years under study, lending credence to my theory that their more crystallized partisan ties are a stronger anchor when it comes to candidate preference.

The ANES open-ended responses also allowed me to test the generalizability of my theory using the 1972 and 1976 election year data. This period of politics was similarly turbulent to the period from 2004 to 2012, with large salient national events like the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal making politics relevant to even the most indifferent of young people. I find that, like we see in the Aughts, the short-term factors and salient national problems factored into the candidate preference of young people more often and at greater magnitudes compared to more quiescent election years, particularly in the issue area of foreign policy.

This dissertation, while furthering our understanding of the conditions under which the "normal" pattern of partisan behavior does not hold, provides greater insight into the social and psychological processes that produce patterns of generational opinion divergence. I offer a theory suggesting that young people are more susceptible to the short-term forces affecting campaigns and elections—namely national context, issues, and candidates—due to their malleable partisan preferences. Older Americans, with more crystallized partisan attachments and better-defined political predispositions, are not as

easily swayed by national conditions and the short-term forces impacting politics. In fact, the affective polarization that has emerged among the masses in recent decades has likely further calcified the ability of older voters to react to the news of the day. This is less true of younger voters, and is likely a major reason for the age gap in vote choice. While young people usually do not pay much attention to nor engage much with politics, prevailing national conditions and a turbulent political environment can render politics more salient, leading to an issue-driven shift in attitudes and opinions about candidate and party competency on handling major problems facing the country. But when the particular issue agenda changes, it is not clear how long those behavioral differences will last.

As Andrew Gelman (2014) and others have noted, where someone ends up on the political spectrum depends on where they start, and older Millennials started during a period where the political forces of the day were strongly pro-Democratic. Does this mean they will always vote for Democrats? Maybe not, because politics can always intervene—especially when partisanship is rather ephemeral, as it may indeed be with Millennials. But is likely that the pro-Democratic flavor that stamped the political proclivities of older Millennials will remain with them by affecting their preferences on current issues as they grow older. The post-Millennial generation has not experienced the same level of political turmoil as they come of political age, and the 2016 results are indicative of a return to the equilibrium where young people look like everyone else. It is unlikely that young people, even with more liberal attitudes, will burn the party system down in the future because in the case of quiescent political times, we should expect them to act on their political preferences as they usually do. And that expectation is for them to not to engage with politics much at all.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research along this line will investigate other contextual factors in a campaign and their effects on vote choice. Journalists provided plenty of anecdotal evidence that Barack Obama won the presidency in 2008 because of his grassroots campaigning and contact by the parties and campaign. Young voters are cynical about politics, and many feel as if politicians do not pay attention to their needs and desires. Direct contact by a party or campaign may do more than mobilize young people to the polls—it may also motivate them to pay attention to the candidate whose campaign reached out to them. While most research on the effects of campaign contact look at its effects on turnout, it is possible that outreach by the parties may also have a persuasive effect on young voters due to their relatively malleable partisan attachments. I have panel data with subjective party contact questions from the 2008 election as well as objective contact data from Republican campaigns in 2012. Future iterations of this project will use these data to determine whether campaign contact does indeed impact the vote choice of young voters.

I also intend to leverage the ANES open-ended questions further by taking a closer look at the specific issues within each issue domain, and determine whether specific issue assessments have a differential impact on the vote choice of young people compared to older individuals. It is possible that within the Economic Policy domain, for example, that the tax policies preferred by the parties affect older people to a greater extent given their higher tax brackets, while gut-level assessments of economic performance or cost of living (e.g. Popkin 1991) might affect individuals with less experience with politics to a greater degree. As such, political sophistication may play a role in vote choice and could be incorporated into these models. In addition, the current models in Chapter 5 are not set up in such a way that allow for the comparison of effects between young and older voters.

Future iterations of this chapter will include tests to determine whether a domain has differential effects for young and older voters within an election year.

Finally, given the prevalence of election information and "fake news" shared through social media in 2016, I would like to perform a social network analysis in the 2020 election cycle to determine the relevance of the sociological model of voting to young people. A number of Pew Reports show that the internet and social media are among the primary ways young people receive political news. These new online social networks may be replacing water-cooler conversations, and it is likely that most young people have a handful of opinion leaders in these social networks. Thus, I would like to investigate the impact of social media on the attitude formation of young people, and whether it impacts the socialization process as young people come of political age.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: CHAPTER 4

Wording and Coding of Questions

Government Spending and Services

2016, 2012, 2008 (old), 2004, 2000 (ftf), 1996

Some people think the government should provide fewer services even in areas such as health and education in order to reduce spending. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Other people feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2,3,4,5 or 6.

Where would you place yourself (Democratic presidential candidate/Republican presidential candidate) on this scale/issue?

1 Government Should Provide Many Fewer Services
7 Government should provide many more services

2008 New

Do you think the government should provide more services than it does now, fewer services than it does now, or about the same number of services as it does now?
1= more services, 3= fewer services, 5= about the same services

(If 1 or 3 above) Do you think that the government should provide a lot more/fewer services, somewhat more/fewer services, or slightly more/fewer services than it does now?
1= a lot more, 3= somewhat, 5=slightly

What about Barack Obama/John McCain?
(Does Barack Obama/John McCain think the government should provide more services than it does now, fewer services than it does now, or about the same number of services as it does now?)
1= more services, 3= fewer services, 5= about the same services

(If 1 or 3 above) Does he (Barack Obama/John McCain) think that the government should provide a lot more/fewer, somewhat more/fewer services, or slightly more/fewer services than it does now?
1= a lot more, 3= somewhat, 5=slightly

2000 (phone) *Note there is a variable that combines the phone and ftf scales, coding values 3 4 and 5 on the 7 point ftf scale as 3 on the 5 point phone scale, for all 2000 variables

Should the government reduce/increase services and spending a great deal or (reduce/increase services and spending) only some? (1 Reduce spending and services a great deal 2 Reduce spending and services only some 3 Stay same as now 4 Increase spending and services only some 5 Increase spending and services a great deal)

Defense Spending

2016, 2012, 2008 (old), 2004, 2000 (ftf), 1996

Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Where would you place yourself (Democratic presidential candidate/Republican presidential candidate) on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?
1 Govt should decrease defense spending
7 Govt should increase defense spending

2008 (new)

Do you think that the government should spend more on national defense, less on national defense, or about the same on national defense as it does now?
1=more, 3=less, 5=about the same

(If 1 or 3 above) Do you think that the government should spend a lot more/less, somewhat more/less, or slightly more/less than it does now?
1= a lot more, 3= somewhat, 5=slightly

What about Barack Obama/John McCain?
(Does Barack Obama/John McCain think that the government should spend more on national defense, less on national defense, or about the same on national defense?)
1=more, 3=less, 5=about the same

(If 1 or 3 above) Does (Barack Obama/John McCain) think that the government spend a lot more/less, somewhat more/less, or slightly more/less than it does now?
1= a lot more, 3= somewhat, 5=slightly

2000 (phone)

5 point-- Do you feel the government should decrease defense spending, increase defense spending, or is the government spending on defense about the right amount now? Should the government decrease/increase defense spending a lot or a little?
(1 Decrease defense spending a lot 2 Decrease defense spending a little 3 About the right amount 4 Increase defense spending a little 5 Increase defense spending a lot 7 Haven't thought much)

Healthcare/Medical Insurance Plan

2016, 2012, 2008 (old), 1996

There is much concern about the rapid rise in medical and hospital costs. Some people feel there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical and hospital expenses for everyone. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that all medical expenses should be paid by individuals through private insurance plans like Blue Cross or other company paid plans. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7.

Where would you place yourself (Democratic presidential candidate/Republican presidential candidate) on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

1 Government Insurance Plan
7 Private insurance plan

2008 (new)

Do you Favor, Oppose, or Neither favor nor oppose the U.S. government paying for all necessary medical care for all Americans?
1= Favor, 2= Oppose, 3= Neither favor nor oppose

(If 1 or 2 above) Do you favor/oppose that a great deal, moderately, or a little?
1= a great deal, 2= moderately, 3= A little

What about Barack Obama/John McCain?

(Does Barack Obama/John McCain favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the U.S. government paying for all necessary medical care for all Americans?)
1= Favor, 2= Oppose, 3= Neither favor nor oppose

(If 1 or 2 above) Does (Barack Obama/John McCain) favor/oppose that a great deal, moderately, or a little?
1= A great deal, 2= Moderately, 3= A little

Summary:
1 Favor a great deal
7 Oppose a great deal

Government Job Guarantees

2016, 2012, 2008 (old), 2004, 2000 (ftf), 1996
Some people feel the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on their own. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

1 Government should see to a job and good standard of living
7 Government should let each person get ahead on own

2008 (new)

Citizens of other countries who have come to live in the United States without the permission of the U.S. government are called "illegal immigrants." Do you Favor, Oppose, or Neither favor nor oppose allowing illegal immigrants to work in the United States for up to three years, after which they would have to go back to their home country?

1= Favor, 2= Oppose, 3= Neither favor nor oppose

(If 1 or 2 above) Do you favor/oppose that a great deal, moderately, or a little?
1= a great deal, 2= moderately, 3= A little

What about Barack Obama/John McCain?

(Does Barack Obama/John McCain favor, allowing illegal immigrants to work in the United States for up to three years, after which they would have to go back to their home country?)
1= Favor, 2= Oppose, 3= Neither favor nor oppose

(If 1 or 2 above) Does (Barack Obama/John McCain) favor/oppose that a great deal, moderately, or a little?
1= A great deal, 2= Moderately, 3= A little

Summary:
1 Favor a great deal
7 Oppose a great deal

2000 (phone)

Do you feel strongly that the government should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living, or not so strongly? Do you feel strongly that the government should just let each person get ahead on their own, or not so strongly?
(1 Strongly - govt see to jobs & std living 2 Not strongly - govt see to jobs & std living 3 Other/depends/neither 4 Not strongly - govt leave people on own 5 Strongly - govt leave people on own)

Aid to Blacks

2016, 2012, 2008, 2004, 2000(ftf), 1996

Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. (Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1.) Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they should help themselves.

Where would you place yourself (Democratic presidential candidate/Republican presidential candidate) on this scale?

1 Government should help blacks
7 Blacks should help themselves

2000 (phone)

Should the government help blacks to a great extent or only to some extent? Should blacks have to help themselves to a great extent or only to some extent?

(1. Govt help blacks to great extent 2 Govt help blacks to some extent 3. Other/neither/depends 4. Should help themselves to some extent 5. Should help themselves to a great extent)

Environment/Jobs

2016, 2012

Some people think the federal government needs to regulate business to protect the environment. They think that efforts to protect the environment will also create jobs. Let us say this is point 1 on a 1-7 scale. Others think that the federal government should not regulate business to protect the environment. They think this regulation will not do much to help the environment and will cost us jobs. Let us say this is point 7 on a 1-7 scale. And of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2,3,4,5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself (Democratic presidential candidate/Republican presidential candidate) on this scale?

1 Regulate business to protect the environment and create jobs
7 No regulation because it will not work and will cost jobs

2008 (old), 2004, 2000 (ftf), 1996

Some people think it is important to protect the environment even if it costs some jobs or otherwise reduces our standard of living. (Suppose these people are at one end of the scale, at point number 1). Other people think that protecting the environment is not as important as maintaining jobs and our standard of living. (Suppose these people are at the other end of the scale, at point number 7. And of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in
between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6).

Where would you place yourself (Democratic presidential candidate/Republican presidential candidate) on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

1 Protect environment, even if it costs jobs & standard of living
7 Jobs & standard of living more important than environment

2008 (new)

Do you FAVOR, OPPOSE, or NEITHER FAVOR NOR OPPOSE the federal government lowering the amount of these gases that power

plants are allowed to put into the air? Do you favor that A GREAT DEAL, MODERATELY, or A LITTLE? / Do you oppose that A GREAT DEAL, MODERATELY, or A LITTLE? /

(1 Favor a great deal 2 Favor moderately 3 Favor a little 4 Neither favor nor oppose 5 Oppose a little 6 Oppose moderately 7 Oppose a great deal)

2000 (phone)

Is protecting the environment much more important (than maintaining jobs and standard of living) or only somewhat more important? Are maintaining jobs and standard of living much more important (than protecting the environment) or only somewhat more important?

(1. Environment much more important 2. Environment somewhat more important 3. Other/depends/neither 4. Jobs somewhat more important 5. Jobs much more important)

Evangelicals (2004)

The 2004 ANES did not ask respondents if they identified as a Born-Again Christian. As a proxy, respondents answering 1 to the following question were coded as Evangelical/Born-Again Christians, all else coded as 0.

Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible? You can just give me the number of your choice.

1. The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word.
2. The Bible is the word of God but not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word.
3. The Bible is a book written by men and is not the word of God.
7. Other (SPECIFY) {VOL}
8. Don't know
9. Refused
0. NA

Table 4.1A: Average 7-point Scale placement, by Issue and by Year (combined results)

		2016			2012			2008			2004			2000			1996		
		Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep
Spending & Services	Young	3.87	2.99	4.9	3.92	2.98	4.8	3.48	2.95	4.02	3.25	3.24	4.4	2.61	2.55	3.15	4.01	3.35	4.72
	(s.e.)	(.15)	(.14)	(.16)	(.1)	(.1)	(.1)	(.1)	(.1)	(.09)	(.11)	(.1)	(.13)	(.07)	(.07)	(.07)	(.11)	(.11)	(.1)
	Older	3.9	2.65	4.94	4.19	2.61	5.09	3.69	2.82	4.35	3.66	3.02	4.52	2.77	2.3	3.24	4.12	3.09	4.76
	(s.e.)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)
Defense Spending	Young	4.01	3.8	5.36	4.05	3.94	4.7	3.69	3.5	5.12	4.22	3.93	5.61	3.06	3.05	3.41	3.84	3.96	4.39
	(s.e.)	(.15)	(.15)	(.13)	(.09)	(.08)	(.09)	(.1)	(.09)	(.08)	(.11)	(.11)	(.1)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.1)	(.11)	(.08)
	Older	4.64	3.77	5.23	4.28	3.63	4.7	4.09	3.3	5.21	4.61	3.54	5.66	3.4	2.99	3.57	4.12	3.98	4.53
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.04)	(.05)	(.04)
Health Insurance	Young	3.78	3	5.67	3.68	2.6	5.28	3.18	2.68	5.01	--	--	--	--	--	--	3.77	2.99	4.98
	(s.e.)	(.18)	(.14)	(.13)	(.13)	(.12)	(.10)	(.13)	(.09)	(.09)	--	--	--	--	--	--	(.13)	(.12)	(.09)
	Older	4	2.75	5.42	4.11	2.44	5.31	3.73	2.7	5.02	--	--	--	--	--	--	4.0	2.94	4.89
	(s.e.)	(.08)	(.07)	(.06)	(.08)	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.05)	(.05)	--	--	--	--	--	--	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)
Job Guarantees	Young	3.91	3.28	5.52	3.88	3.06	5.19	3.67	3.31	4.63	3.71	3.42	4.88	3.29	2.75	3.24	4.18	3.46	4.89
	(s.e.)	(.15)	(.15)	(.15)	(.1)	(.11)	(.09)	(.11)	(.09)	(.1)	(.13)	(.10)	(.11)	(.09)	(.08)	(.09)	(.13)	(.1)	(.09)
	Older	4.34	3.03	5.62	4.47	2.94	5.49	4.14	3.18	4.55	4.34	3.28	5.11	3.43	2.65	3.59	4.48	3.32	4.93
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.04)	(.04)	(.03)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)
Aid to Blacks	Young	3.89	3.33	5.56	4.29	3	5.03	4.41	2.91	4.69	4.13	3.54	4.71	3.23	2.77	3.36	4.66	3.44	4.76
	(s.e.)	(.17)	(.13)	(.16)	(.11)	(.07)	(.09)	(.10)	(.08)	(.09)	(.14)	(.08)	(.1)	(.09)	(.07)	(.07)	(.13)	(.1)	(.09)
	Older	4.38	2.94	5.5	4.89	3.16	5.2	4.78	3.17	4.82	4.65	3.48	4.78	3.44	2.59	3.33	4.82	3.41	4.82
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)	(.03)	(.03)	(.05)	(.04)	(.04)
Enviro/ Jobs	Young	3.16	3.12	5.06	2.93	2.85	4.77	3.07	3.21	4.12	3.47	4.33	4.36	2.74	2.76	3.16	3.33	3.63	4.49
	(s.e.)	(.16)	(.14)	(.17)	(.1)	(.1)	(.09)	(.11)	(.09)	(.08)	(.12)	(.1)	(.11)	(.08)	(.07)	(.08)	(.1)	(.1)	(.09)
	Older	3.24	2.71	5.18	3.33	2.76	4.76	3.42	3.33	3.99	3.75	4.11	4.17	2.61	2.43	3.21	3.67	3.52	4.39
	(s.e.)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.06)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.05)	(.04)	(.04)

Note: Standard errors are reported below the means. "Dem"= Democratic candidate placement, "Rep"= Republican candidate placement, and "Self"= self-placement. 2008 values combine the old and new question formats; 2000 values combine interview modes.

Table 4.1B: 2008 and 2000 Average 7-point scale placement, by version

		2008 Old Version			2008 New Version			2000 Face to Face			2000 Phone		
		Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep	Self	Dem	Rep
Spend Services	Young	3.6	2.92	4.13	3.37	2.98	3.92	3.33	3.46	4.18	2.46	2.31	3.24
	(s.e.)	(.13)	(.11)	(.14)	(.16)	(.17)	(.11)	(.13)	(.13)	(.12)	(.12)	(.13)	(.13)
	Older	3.72	2.75	4.42	3.66	2.9	4.27	3.68	2.93	4.32	2.7	2.1	3.41
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.08)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.06)
Defense Spending	Young	3.77	3.74	5.34	3.61	3.26	4.91	4.18	4.05	4.6	3.14	3.18	3.71
	(s.e.)	(.12)	(.12)	(.11)	(.14)	(.14)	(.12)	(.13)	(.09)	(.1)	(.13)	(.11)	(.11)
	Older	4.31	3.43	5.36	3.86	3.17	5.07	4.66	4.07	4.89	3.53	2.96	3.77
	(s.e.)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)
Health Insurance	Young	3.34	2.98	5.11	3.02	2.38	4.92	--	--	--	--	--	--
	(s.e.)	(.15)	(.12)	(.13)	(.21)	(.12)	(.13)	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Older	3.76	2.93	5.01	3.71	2.47	5.02	--	--	--	--	--	--
	(s.e.)	(.08)	(.07)	(.06)	(.11)	(.07)	(.07)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Job Guarantees	Young	3.86	3.26	4.87	3.49	3.36	4.4	4.21	3.78	4.31	3.55	2.52	3.36
	(s.e.)	(.13)	(.11)	(.11)	(.18)	(.13)	(.14)	(.15)	(.12)	(.13)	(.18)	(.17)	(.18)
	Older	4.39	3.1	5.1	3.88	3.25	4	4.58	3.69	4.75	3.62	2.37	3.87
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.1)	(.06)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)
Aid to Blacks	Young	4.22	2.77	4.75	4.6	3.04	4.63	4.38	3.79	4.46	3.28	2.53	3.52
	(s.e.)	(.15)	(.116	(.12)	(.14)	(.12)	(.13)	(.17)	(.12)	(.11)	(.14)	(.13)	(.13)
	Older	4.77	3.03	4.94	4.79	3.3	4.71	4.81	3.49	4.6	3.43	2.39	3.41
	(s.e.)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.08)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)
Environment	Young	3.68	3.72	4.51	2.48	2.72	3.73	3.74	3.61	4.23	2.62	2.68	3.32
	(s.e.)	(.12)	(.107	(.11)	(.15)	(.13)	(.11)	(.14)	(.12)	(.11)	(.15)	(.13)	(.16)
	Older	4.09	3.74	4.41	2.74	2.92	3.54	3.66	3.36	4.54	2.4	2.16	3.21
	(s.e.)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.08)	(.07)	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)

Note: Standard errors are reported below the means. "Dem"= Democratic candidate placement, "Rep"= Republican candidate placement, and "Self"= self-placement. 2000 phone format questions were asked on a 5-point scale.

Table 4.2A: Model 1- Determinants of Candidate Preference (Probit) Combined Results

	2016		2012		2008 (Combined)		2004		2000 (Combined)		1996	
Independent Variables	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older	Young	Older
Party Identification	.49**	.34***	.56***	.321***	.5***	.38***	.58***	.43***	.47***	.45***	.67**	.41***
	(.17)	(.06)	(.21)	(.05)	(.08)	(-.04)	(.12)	(.05)	(.10)	(.04)	(.22)	(.04)
Female	.82	.21	-.3	.07	-.06	.04	-.39	-.11	.56*	.08	.05	.13
	(.55)	(.21)	(.27)	(.16)	(.26)	(.13)	(.36)	(.15)	(.28)	(.13)	(.44)	(.14)
Black	1.52*	.81	.43	1.03*	(omitted)	1.68***	3.1***	.29	.6	1.6***	2.9**	1.4***
	(.67)	(.48)	(.44)	(.47)		(.35)	(.68)	(.23)	(.44)	(.27)	(1.1)	(.37)
Latino	-.4	.51	.10	.65***	.11	.49***	-.22	.01	-.1	.32	1.6*	.1
	(.58)	(.32)	(.37)	(.18)	(.28)	(.14)	(.63)	(.46)	(.38)	(.3)	(.76)	(.24)
Union Household	-.9	-.06	.49	-.24	-1.08*	-.12	.73*	.6**	.23	.09	1.7*	.11
	(1.04)	(.25)	(.47)	(.22)	(.44)	(.2)	(.35)	(.19)	(.45)	(.18)	(.74)	(.19)
Evangelical	-.78	-.12	-.48	-.33*	-.68*	-.44***	-.43	-.13	-.55	-.3*	-.84	-.03
	(.66)	(.25)	(-.48)	(.17)	(.31)	(.13)	(.41)	(.16)	(.29)	(.13)	(.46)	(.15)
Spending	--	.13*	.09	.08	.09	.08	.18	.17***	.34**	.23***	.27	.18***
	--	(.06)	(.1)	(.05)	(.07)	(.04)	(.11)	(.05)	(.13)	(.06)	(.23)	(.05)
Job Guarantees	.48***	.19**	.21*	.07	-0.07	.03	.12	.17***	.18	.17***	.11	.19***
	(.14)	(.07)	(.09)	(.05)	(.07)	(.03)	(.11)	(.05)	(.11)	(.05)	(.15)	(.05)
Environment	.33*	.24***	.20*	.14*	.29*	.11*	.18*	.03	.11	.18**	.3	.16**
	(.13)	(.06)	(.1)	(.05)	(.12)	(.05)	(.09)	(.04)	(.12)	(.06)	(.17)	(.06)
Healthcare/Insurance	.03	.12**	.11	.11**	.09	.11***	--	--	--	--	.22	.17***
	(.08)	(.05)	(.07)	(.04)	(.05)	(.03)	--	--	--	--	(.14)	(.04)
Aid to Blacks	.36*	.08	.06	.08	.18*	.19***	.13	.10	.13	.12	.69**	.22***
	(.16)	(.06)	(.11)	(.04)	(.07)	(.03)	(.17)	(.06)	(.12)	(.07)	(.26)	(.06)
Defense	.14	.27***	-.07	.23***	.13	.14***	.45***	.19***	-.07	.28***	.16	.12*
	(.13)	(.08)	(.11)	(.06)	(.12)	(.04)	(.11)	(.05)	(.14)	(.07)	(.19)	(.05)
Constant	-2.6***	-1.8***	-1.6**	-1.1***	-.62*	-.86***	-1.6***	-1.5***	-1.7***	-1.4***	-.88	-.67***
	(.76)	(.32)	(.51)	(.26)	(.29)	(.18)	(.36)	(.19)	(.4)	(.15)	(.64)	(.17)
Pseudo R^2	.73	.76	0.63	0.66	.61	.62	.68	.62	.39	.57	.76	.68
N	116	688	350	1308	251	1539	180	799	184	1159	160	1125

Note:*p<= .05; **p<= .01; ***p<= .001; the "black" variable was omitted from the 2008 young analysis due to perfect separation.
The healthcare/insurance question was not asked at all in 2000, and candidate placement was not asked in 2004. Spending and services for the young was omitted in 2016 due to multicollinearity. Missing values were coded as the midpoint, 4

Table 4.2B: Model 1 - Determinants of Candidate Preference for 2008 and 2000, by Version Type

	2008						2000					
	18-29-year-olds			*30 Years and Older*			*18-29-year-olds*			*30 Years and Older*		
Independent Variables	Old	New	Both	Old	New	Both	FTF	Phone	Both	FTF	Phone	Both
Party Identification	.63***	.82***	.59***	.46***	.53***	.48***	.59***	.50***	.48***	.51***	.56***	.53***
	(.16)	(.13)	(.09)	(.05)	(.05)	(.03)	(.16)	(.14)	(.10)	(.05)	(.05)	(.03)
Female	.03	.1	-.07	-.09	-.14	-.11	.23	.46	.32	.22	-.19	.08
	(.37)	(.38)	(.25)	(.18)	(.17)	(.12)	(.34)	(.45)	(.27)	(.16)	(.19)	(.12)
Black	omitted	omitted	omitted	2.87***	1.57***	1.95***	omitted	.52	.83	1.38***	1.23***	1.32***
	--	--	--	(.58)	(.42)	(.37)	--	(.74)	(.46)	(.3)	(.31)	(.23)
Latino	.35	-.69	-.10	.44*	.32	.41**	-.22	-.1	-.22	.26	-.03	.19
	(.49)	(.43)	(.31)	(.2)	(.2)	(.14)	(.51)	(.58)	(.42)	(.3)	(.48)	(.26)
Union Household	-1.76**	-.62	-.95*	.02	-.27	-.13	.21	.10	.02	.1	-.08	.01
	(.61)	(.55)	(.44)	(.22)	(.28)	(.19)	(.58)	(.78)	(.42)	(.22)	(.27)	(.17)
Evangelical	-.67	-.94**	-.75**	-.72***	-.19	-.49***	-.45	-.98	-.62*	-.35*	-.27	-.33*
	(.39)	(.36)	(.29)	(.17)	(.17)	(.12)	(.35)	(.55)	(.29)	(.17)	(.2)	(.13)
Spending	0	.37	.03	.15*	.05	.08	.15	.19	.16	.03	.22*	.14
	(.14)	(.21)	(.12)	(.07)	(.08)	(.05)	(.17)	(.19)	(.19)	(.08)	(.09)	(.09)
Job Guarantees	-.08	.05	-0.03	-.06	.08*	.05	-.01	.1	.03	.06	.11	.12
	(.18)	(.1)	(.12)	(.07)	(.04)	(.05)	(.25)	(.16)	(.21)	(.11)	(.09)	(.10)
Environment	.66*	-.05	.26	.24	.09*	.22**	.33	-.34	-.13	.22*	-.03	.15
	(.25)	(.12)	(.17)	(.16)	(.04)	(.08)	(.28)	(.24)	(.24)	(.1)	(.12)	(.11)
Healthcare/Insurance	.33*	-.04	.14*	.06	.09**	.08*	--	--	--	--	--	--
	(.15)	(.07)	(.07)	(.05)	(.03)	(.03)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Aid to Blacks	.16	.33*	.31**	.16*	.09	.14**	-.25	.26	.21	-.02	.26	.22
	(.15)	(.13)	(.11)	(.07)	(.06)	(.05)	(.27)	(.27)	(.28)	(.12)	(.13)	(.14)
Defense	.23	.59*	.22*	.12	.17	.10*	-.3	.03	.07	.3**	.22	.24*
	(.15)	(.31)	(.11)	(.06)	(.11)	(.04)	(.23)	(.32)	(.3)	(.1)	(.12)	(.12)
Constant	-1.08*	-1.17**	-.8*	-1.11***	-1.5***	-1.15***	-2.06***	-1.6*	-1.56***	-1.8***	-1.51***	-1.69***
	(.53)	(.43)	(.32)	(.25)	(.2)	(.16)	(.65)	(.69)	(.4)	(.21)	(.05)	(.14)
Pseudo R^2	.56	.67	.57	.53	.57	.54	.32	.33	.33	.48	.55	.5
N	116	135	251	761	778	1539	87	78	184	635	523	1159

Note:*p<= .05; **p<= .01; ***p<= .001; the "black" variable was omitted from the 2008 young analysis due to perfect separation.

APPENDIX B: CHAPTER 5

Domain Recoding Scheme
(based on the 2004 ANES Codebook)

People in the Party

1 through 97

Party Administration and Conduct

121 122 131 132 133 134 135 141 151 161 162 163 164 165 166 169 170 171 172 173 174 191 197 502 503 601 602 603 604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620 621 622 623 625 626 627 697 703 704 705 706 707 708 709 710 718 719 720 721 722 729 730 731 732 734 735 739 740 741 742 744 796 797 802 803 804 807 808 811 812 813 814 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 841 842 843 845 846 897

Party Affect

101 102 111 112 167 168 500 501 701 702 711 723 728

Record and Performance

213 214 222 223 224 225 321 322 329 330 331 332 407 408 409 410 439 440 456 465 469 498 505 553 554 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 621 622 623 625 705 706 709 710 730 740 744 804

Experience and Management

203 211 212 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 305 306 311 312 313 314 315 316 323 324 327 328 335 336 337 397 502 503 504 535 536 541 542 601 602 605 606 697 841 842 845 846

Trust

401 402 403 404 431 432 551 552 603 604 719 720 728 731 734 735 741 742

Intelligence

309 310 319 320 325 326 333 334 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 441 442 447 464 617 618 707 708 833 834 835 836

Personality

301 302 303 304 307 308 317 318 405 406 411 412 423 424 433 434 435 436 437 438 453 454 457 459 460 470 490 491 495 496 497 807 808 829 830 831 832 837 838

General Candidate Comments

201 297 425 426 427 428 429 430 443 444 445 446 448 449 450 451 452 455 458 461 462 463 466 467 468 471 472 506 507 508 531 532 533 534 543 555 556 597 615 616 619 620 626 627 701 702 703 704 711 718 721 722 723 724 725 726 727 732 739 743 796 797 802 803 811 812 813 814 843 897 5001 5002 5003 5004

Foreign Policy

513 514 519 520 871 1101 1102 1103 1104 1105 1106 1107 1108 1109 1110 1111 1112 1113 1114 1115 1116 1117 1118 1119 1120 1121 1122 1123 1124 1125 1126 1127 1128 1129 1130 1131 1132 1133 1134 1135 1136 1137 1138 1139 1140 1141 1142 1143 1144 1145 1146 1147 1148 1149 1150 1151 1152 1155 1156 1157 1158 1159 1160 1161 1162 1163 1164 1165 1166 1167 1168 1169 1170 1171 1172 1173 1174 1175 1176 1177 1178 1179 1180 1181 1182 1183 1184 1185 1186 1187 1188 1189 1190 1191 1192 1193 1194 1195 1196 1197 1198 1199 1300 1301 1305 1306 1307

Economic Policy

901 902 903 904 911 912 913 929 930 931 932 933 934 935 936 937 938 939 940 941 942 943 944 945 1007 1008 1009 1035 1036 1037 1046

Social Welfare

805 806 809 810 905 906 907 908 909 910 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926 927 928 965 966 967 991 992 993 994 995 996 998 1001 1002 1003 1038 1039 1040 1059 1060 1061

Moral Issues

847 848 849 979 980 981 985 986 987 1019 1020 1021 1022 1023 1024 1065 1066 1067 1068 1069 1070 1071

Energy and the Environment

959 960 961 962 963 964 1004 1005 1006 1062 1063 1064

Other Domestic Issues

511 512 517 518 827 828 870 900 946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955 956 957 958 968 969 970 971 972 973 974 975 976 977 978 982 983 984 988 989 990 997 1013 1014 1015 1016 1017 1018 1025 1026 1027 1028 1029 1030 1041 1042 1043 1044 1045 1047 1048 1049 1053 1054 1055 1056 1057 1058 1302 1303 1304

General Issue Comments

509 510 515 516 544 801 815 816 817 818 1010 1011 1012 1031 1032 1033 1050 1051 1052 1153 1154

Group Associations

819 820 821 822 823 824 1201 1202 1203 1204 1205 1206 1207 1208 1209 1210 1211 1212 1213 1214 1215 1216 1217 1218 1219 1220 1221 1222 1223 1224 1225 1226 1227 1228 1229 1230 1231 1232 1233 1234 1235 1236 1239 1240 1241 1242 1243 1244 1245 1246 1247 1248 1249 1250 1251 1252 1297

Table 5.6: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 2012

Object or Domain		*Pro-Rep.*	*Anti-Rep.*	*Pro-Dem.*	*Anti-Dem.*	*Total*	*Partisan Valence*
Record and Performance	18-29	11	21	80	29	141	21.63
	30 and over	60	102	330	161	653	16.16
Experience and Management	18-29	43	32	17	31	123	-10.16
	30 and over	227	173	83	156	639	-9.94
Trust	18-29	0	30	8	13	51	24.51
	30 and over	50	193	107	77	427	20.26
Intelligence	18-29	6	26	27	4	63	34.13
	30 and over	28	99	140	20	287	33.28
Personality	18-29	9	36	21	10	76	25.00
	30 and over	64	162	135	50	411	22.26
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	26	40	81	19	166	22.89
	30 and over	120	207	321	117	765	19.02
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*95*	*185*	*234*	*106*	*620*	*17.58*
	30 and over	*549*	*936*	*1116*	*581*	*3182*	*14.49*
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	40	83	95	65	283	12.90
	30 and over	234	453	467	353	1507	11.05
Party Affect	18-29	11	35	19	10	75	22.00
	30 and over	52	133	107	43	335	21.64
People in the Party	18-29	5	9	12	8	34	11.76
	30 and over	36	61	69	44	210	11.90
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*56*	*127*	*126*	*83*	*392*	*14.54*
	30 and over	*322*	*647*	*643*	*440*	*2052*	*12.87*
Foreign Policy	18-29	25	24	51	32	132	6.82
	30 and over	103	113	155	153	524	1.15
Economic Policy	18-29	59	105	93	49	306	14.71
	30 and over	291	285	302	204	1082	4.25
Social Welfare	18-29	39	70	152	79	340	15.29
	30 and over	174	289	452	309	1224	10.54
Moral Issues	18-29	36	80	65	38	219	16.21
	30 and over	130	179	128	151	588	2.21
Energy and the Environment	18-29	2	4	9	3	18	22.22
	30 and over	9	13	32	15	69	15.22
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	11	47	32	10	100	29.00
	30 and over	50	119	113	52	334	19.46
General Issue Comments	18-29	48	57	45	27	177	7.63
	30 and over	183	235	168	136	722	5.82
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*220*	*387*	*447*	*238*	*1292*	*14.55*
	30 and over	*940*	*1233*	*1350*	*1020*	*4543*	*6.86*
Group Associations	*18-29*	*14*	*102*	*116*	*10*	*242*	*40.08*
	30 and over	*77*	*476*	*448*	*62*	*1063*	*36.92*

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.7: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 2008

Object or Domain		***Pro-Rep.***	***Anti-Rep.***	***Pro-Dem.***	***Anti-Dem.***	***Total***	***Partisan Valence***
Record and Performance	18-29	12	24	45	9	90	26.67
	30 and over	98	119	200	68	485	15.77
Experience and Management	18-29	57	37	26	44	164	-11.59
	30 and over	444	211	133	284	1072	-17.91
Trust	18-29	5	8	10	11	34	2.94
	30 and over	73	61	68	117	319	-9.56
Intelligence	18-29	8	7	52	11	78	25.64
	30 and over	67	100	273	46	486	26.75
Personality	18-29	7	6	17	17	47	-1.06
	30 and over	55	66	115	84	320	6.56
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	18	43	97	35	193	22.54
	30 and over	139	275	466	273	1153	14.27
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*73*	*101*	*179*	*92*	*445*	*12.92*
	30 and over	*599*	*628*	*834*	*614*	*2675*	*4.65*
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	33	67	64	60	224	8.48
	30 and over	225	422	456	446	1549	6.68
Party Affect	18-29	20	40	33	11	104	20.19
	30 and over	128	211	218	51	608	20.56
People in the Party	18-29	11	44	12	5	72	27.78
	30 and over	72	234	79	70	455	18.79
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*55*	*122*	*96*	*69*	*342*	*13.74*
	30 and over	*374*	*715*	*641*	*525*	*2255*	*10.13*
Foreign Policy	18-29	30	68	53	23	174	19.54
	30 and over	155	263	165	77	660	14.85
Economic Policy	18-29	35	56	72	28	191	17.02
	30 and over	143	311	296	138	888	18.36
Social Welfare	18-29	21	30	82	29	162	19.14
	30 and over	108	134	348	151	741	15.05
Moral Issues	18-29	28	40	25	36	129	0.39
	30 and over	141	131	52	135	459	-10.13
Energy and the Environment	18-29	6	16	30	3	55	33.64
	30 and over	38	60	70	27	195	16.67
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	11	15	29	9	64	18.75
	30 and over	51	37	73	48	209	2.63
General Issue Comments	18-29	35	51	60	26	172	14.53
	30 and over	199	263	277	169	908	9.47
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*166*	*276*	*351*	*154*	*947*	*16.21*
	30 and over	*835*	*1199*	*1281*	*745*	*4060*	*11.08*
Group Associations	*18-29*	*10*	*50*	*71*	*9*	*140*	*36.43*
	30 and over	*73*	*376*	*456*	*48*	*953*	*37.30*

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.8: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 2004

Object or Domain		***Pro-Rep.***	***Anti-Rep.***	***Pro-Dem.***	***Anti-Dem.***	***Total***	***Partisan Valence***
Record and Performance	18-29	24	31	17	28	100	-2.00
	30 and over	103	97	83	98	381	-2.76
Experience and Management	18-29	9	19	16	36	80	-6.25
	30 and over	64	96	100	147	407	-1.84
Trust	18-29	17	9	3	24	53	-27.36
	30 and over	126	100	53	100	379	-9.63
Intelligence	18-29	8	24	13	12	57	14.91
	30 and over	32	77	72	39	220	17.73
Personality	18-29	26	9	3	41	79	-34.81
	30 and over	169	59	34	203	465	-30.00
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	18	25	49	19	111	16.67
	30 and over	111	98	156	110	475	3.47
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*70*	*85*	*70*	*91*	*316*	*-0.95*
	30 and over	*401*	*340*	*314*	*421*	*1476*	*-5.69*
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	32	34	37	61	164	-6.71
	30 and over	199	227	195	271	892	-2.69
Party Affect	18-29	9	10	17	5	41	15.85
	30 and over	60	43	108	48	259	8.30
People in the Party	18-29	5	9	13	5	32	18.75
	30 and over	42	18	35	46	141	-12.41
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*39*	*50*	*62*	*66*	*217*	*1.61*
	30 and over	*265*	*262*	*281*	*316*	*1124*	*-1.69*
Foreign Policy	18-29	49	109	42	32	232	15.09
	30 and over	239	365	128	113	845	8.34
Economic Policy	18-29	29	39	36	18	122	11.48
	30 and over	137	174	124	79	514	7.98
Social Welfare	18-29	13	23	33	14	83	17.47
	30 and over	78	87	134	104	403	4.84
Moral Issues	18-29	18	36	24	17	95	13.16
	30 and over	85	93	57	75	310	-1.61
Energy and the Environment	18-29	2	16	16	3	37	36.49
	30 and over	2	27	30	2	61	43.44
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	10	27	31	7	75	27.33
	30 and over	36	87	103	51	277	18.59
General Issue Comments	18-29	16	22	26	23	87	5.17
	30 and over	109	72	97	139	417	-9.47
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*87*	*146*	*113*	*78*	*424*	*11.08*
	30 and over	*438*	*533*	*375*	*337*	*1683*	*3.95*
Group Associations	*18-29*	*7*	*44*	*50*	*9*	*110*	*35.45*
	30 and over	*59*	*270*	*278*	*53*	*660*	*33.03*

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.9: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 2000

Object or Domain		***Pro-Rep.***	***Anti-Rep.***	***Pro-Dem.***	***Anti-Dem.***	***Total***	***Partisan Valence***
Record and Performance	18-29	13	19	19	23	74	1.35
	30 and over	85	115	116	130	446	1.79
Experience and Management	18-29	12	22	30	18	82	13.41
	30 and over	134	200	223	149	706	9.92
Trust	18-29	14	20	3	27	64	-14.06
	30 and over	166	117	101	261	645	-16.20
Intelligence	18-29	11	19	14	8	52	13.46
	30 and over	66	140	104	59	369	16.12
Personality	18-29	21	7	15	20	63	-15.08
	30 and over	86	79	117	90	372	2.69
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	32	25	38	40	135	-3.33
	30 and over	256	173	197	249	875	-7.71
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*71*	*71*	*81*	*92*	315	-1.75
	30 and over	*495*	*523*	*511*	*574*	2103	-0.83
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	32	37	49	42	160	3.75
	30 and over	289	326	274	382	1271	-2.79
Party Affect	18-29	17	16	22	7	62	11.29
	30 and over	126	128	162	68	484	9.92
People in the Party	18-29	7	2	9	11	29	-12.07
	30 and over	56	55	63	77	251	-2.99
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*48*	*52*	*71*	*52*	223	5.16
	30 and over	*405*	*439*	*433*	*470*	1747	-0.09
Foreign Policy	18-29	13	7	6	15	41	-18.29
	30 and over	109	57	39	74	279	-15.59
Economic Policy	18-29	30	27	29	12	98	7.14
	30 and over	240	180	183	111	714	0.84
Social Welfare	18-29	33	34	68	26	161	13.35
	30 and over	317	179	399	242	1137	0.84
Moral Issues	18-29	29	27	25	19	100	2.00
	30 and over	144	143	112	133	532	-2.07
Energy and the Environment	18-29	3	14	20	8	45	25.56
	30 and over	20	56	132	65	273	18.86
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	33	43	34	28	138	5.80
	30 and over	196	196	194	148	734	3.13
General Issue Comments	18-29	24	34	30	24	112	7.14
	30 and over	222	95	116	146	579	-13.56
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*97*	*117*	*122*	*87*	423	6.50
	30 and over	*661*	*550*	*700*	*550*	2461	0.79
Group Associations	*18-29*	*12*	*63*	*64*	*12*	151	34.11
	30 and over	*128*	*404*	*449*	*104*	1085	28.62

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.10: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 1996

Object or Domain		*Pro-Rep.*	*Anti-Rep.*	*Pro-Dem.*	*Anti-Dem.*	*Total*	*Partisan Valence*
Record and Performance	18-29	9	19	43	27	98	13.27
	30 and over	97	182	298	149	726	16.12
Experience and Management	18-29	24	18	20	21	83	-4.22
	30 and over	306	172	148	174	800	-10.00
Trust	18-29	19	13	7	60	99	-29.80
	30 and over	234	57	50	481	822	-36.98
Intelligence	18-29	3	24	12	3	42	35.71
	30 and over	45	112	95	23	275	25.27
Personality	18-29	5	18	14	15	52	11.54
	30 and over	57	97	87	133	374	-0.80
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	18	47	38	16	119	21.43
	30 and over	177	378	227	171	953	13.48
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*54*	*89*	*91*	*90*	324	5.56
	30 and over	*527*	*657*	*596*	*694*	2474	0.65
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	15	19	14	14	62	3.23
	30 and over	145	159	119	186	609	-4.35
Party Affect	18-29	15	13	13	2	43	10.47
	30 and over	91	77	95	28	291	9.11
People in the Party	18-29	1	5	3	2	11	22.73
	30 and over	18	28	20	20	86	5.81
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*29*	*33*	*25*	*17*	104	5.77
	30 and over	*219*	*237*	*212*	*214*	882	0.91
Foreign Policy	18-29	8	5	11	18	42	-11.90
	30 and over	49	26	94	98	267	-5.06
Economic Policy	18-29	30	21	30	15	96	3.13
	30 and over	167	169	196	110	642	6.85
Social Welfare	18-29	14	32	64	21	131	23.28
	30 and over	171	155	303	180	809	6.61
Moral Issues	18-29	17	30	31	29	107	7.01
	30 and over	104	126	89	160	479	-5.11
Energy and the Environment	18-29	0	5	8	3	16	31.25
	30 and over	3	28	61	10	102	37.25
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	10	18	34	23	85	11.18
	30 and over	68	82	164	118	432	6.94
General Issue Comments	18-29	17	24	17	12	70	8.57
	30 and over	180	158	125	127	590	-2.03
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*61*	*85*	*115*	*83*	344	8.14
	30 and over	*450*	*463*	*593*	*493*	1999	2.83
Group Associations	*18-29*	*6*	*36*	*40*	*9*	91	33.52
	30 and over	*60*	*264*	*277*	*68*	669	30.87

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.11: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 1992

Object or Domain		*Pro-Rep.*	*Anti-Rep.*	*Pro-Dem.*	*Anti-Dem.*	*Total*	*Partisan Valence*
Record and Performance	18-29	45	111	35	41	232	12.93
	30 and over	229	469	155	164	1017	11.36
Experience and Management	18-29	70	43	52	113	278	-15.83
	30 and over	352	224	222	495	1293	-15.51
Trust	18-29	11	24	13	44	92	-9.78
	30 and over	131	166	67	229	593	-10.71
Intelligence	18-29	11	29	44	10	94	27.66
	30 and over	86	111	230	92	519	15.70
Personality	18-29	25	14	22	36	97	-12.89
	30 and over	155	95	105	150	505	-10.40
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	34	28	85	34	181	12.43
	30 and over	273	145	526	215	1159	7.89
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*134*	*188*	*166*	*190*	678	2.21
	30 and over	*759*	*850*	*837*	*877*	3323	0.77
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	44	73	69	83	269	2.79
	30 and over	293	424	341	543	1601	-2.22
Party Affect	18-29	13	7	22	14	56	1.79
	30 and over	105	88	182	57	432	12.50
People in the Party	18-29	20	16	9	14	59	-7.63
	30 and over	57	72	65	66	260	2.69
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*71*	*92*	*93*	*102*	358	1.68
	30 and over	*407*	*530*	*505*	*612*	2054	0.39
Foreign Policy	18-29	120	89	24	25	258	-6.20
	30 and over	457	412	69	74	1012	-2.47
Economic Policy	18-29	46	168	103	66	383	20.76
	30 and over	218	741	452	272	1683	20.89
Social Welfare	18-29	28	63	102	39	232	21.12
	30 and over	151	286	408	242	1087	13.85
Moral Issues	18-29	43	60	49	30	182	9.89
	30 and over	215	213	131	163	722	-2.35
Energy and the Environment	18-29	2	17	20	3	42	38.10
	30 and over	13	73	60	16	162	32.10
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	21	47	37	17	122	18.85
	30 and over	65	221	143	58	487	24.74
General Issue Comments	18-29	28	28	39	31	126	3.17
	30 and over	158	99	186	162	605	-2.89
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*185*	*273*	*209*	*135*	802	10.10
	30 and over	*820*	*1146*	*862*	*625*	3453	8.15
Group Associations	*18-29*	*23*	*111*	*99*	*30*	263	29.85
	30 and over	*122*	*619*	*635*	*119*	1495	33.88

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.12: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 1988

Object or Domain		***Pro-Rep.***	***Anti-Rep.***	***Pro-Dem.***	***Anti-Dem.***	***Total***	***Partisan Valence***
Record and Performance	18-29	16	28	19	20	83	6.63
	30 and over	80	148	94	105	427	6.67
Experience and Management	18-29	92	57	38	57	244	-11.07
	30 and over	456	229	166	313	1164	-16.07
Trust	18-29	13	26	8	16	63	3.97
	30 and over	60	87	79	54	280	9.29
Intelligence	18-29	15	29	20	15	79	12.03
	30 and over	71	82	102	57	312	8.97
Personality	18-29	16	19	27	21	83	5.42
	30 and over	105	123	94	105	427	0.82
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	36	21	52	33	142	1.41
	30 and over	148	155	181	156	640	2.50
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*142*	*121*	*120*	*113*	496	-1.41
	30 and over	*623*	*559*	*464*	*572*	2218	-3.88
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	52	42	55	58	207	-3.14
	30 and over	275	249	215	365	1104	-7.97
Party Affect	18-29	27	21	45	16	109	10.55
	30 and over	140	100	213	64	517	10.54
People in the Party	18-29	12	9	10	10	41	-3.66
	30 and over	75	44	46	54	219	-8.90
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*83*	*69*	*94*	*77*	323	0.46
	30 and over	*412*	*357*	*417*	*439*	1625	-2.37
Foreign Policy	18-29	98	90	36	53	277	-4.51
	30 and over	303	311	102	173	889	-3.54
Economic Policy	18-29	86	47	55	63	251	-9.36
	30 and over	321	200	205	194	920	-5.98
Social Welfare	18-29	30	47	74	46	197	11.42
	30 and over	153	173	366	244	936	7.59
Moral Issues	18-29	29	20	14	40	103	-16.99
	30 and over	134	60	44	139	377	-22.41
Energy and the Environment	18-29	1	16	16	16	49	15.31
	30 and over	9	34	39	38	120	10.83
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	29	19	30	76	154	-18.18
	30 and over	117	106	129	276	628	-12.58
General Issue Comments	18-29	53	16	25	31	125	-17.20
	30 and over	248	117	118	183	666	-14.71
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*191*	*158*	*140*	*185*	674	-5.79
	30 and over	*675*	*616*	*596*	*684*	2571	-2.86
Group Associations	*18-29*	*21*	*77*	*106*	*27*	231	29.22
	30 and over	*90*	*412*	*557*	*112*	1171	32.75

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.13: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 1984

Object or Domain		***Pro-Rep.***	***Anti-Rep.***	***Pro-Dem.***	***Anti-Dem.***	***Total***	***Partisan Valence***
Record and Performance	18-29	110	29	26	53	218	-24.77
	30 and over	340	129	115	185	769	-18.27
Experience and Management	18-29	59	43	49	83	234	-10.68
	30 and over	182	145	159	296	782	-11.13
Trust	18-29	21	25	29	27	102	2.94
	30 and over	120	81	113	81	395	-0.89
Intelligence	18-29	20	17	24	28	89	-3.93
	30 and over	69	76	70	76	291	0.17
Personality	18-29	62	16	20	44	142	-24.65
	30 and over	180	52	55	148	435	-25.40
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	44	68	92	77	281	6.94
	30 and over	185	234	250	298	967	0.05
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*217*	*148*	*168*	*213*	746	-7.64
	30 and over	*672*	*529*	*513*	*724*	2438	-7.26
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	80	71	108	87	346	1.73
	30 and over	286	196	296	334	1112	-5.76
Party Affect	18-29	13	7	51	11	82	20.73
	30 and over	74	59	195	37	365	19.59
People in the Party	18-29	30	16	13	23	82	-14.63
	30 and over	105	41	78	99	323	-13.16
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*107*	*92*	*148*	*110*	457	2.52
	30 and over	*415*	*269*	*485*	*426*	1595	-2.73
Foreign Policy	18-29	125	171	80	66	442	6.79
	30 and over	378	386	183	209	1156	-0.78
Economic Policy	18-29	166	103	71	87	427	-9.25
	30 and over	474	302	204	243	1223	-8.63
Social Welfare	18-29	57	95	54	38	244	11.07
	30 and over	238	364	205	232	1039	4.76
Moral Issues	18-29	37	32	21	36	126	-7.94
	30 and over	90	106	38	72	306	-2.94
Energy and the Environment	18-29	1	10	11	1	23	41.30
	30 and over	4	39	22	1	66	42.42
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	22	30	37	15	104	14.42
	30 and over	63	93	74	43	273	11.17
General Issue Comments	18-29	38	19	31	34	122	-9.02
	30 and over	221	59	92	158	530	-21.51
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*246*	*285*	*190*	*174*	895	3.07
	30 and over	*784*	*832*	*527*	*575*	2718	0.00
Group Associations	*18-29*	*24*	*124*	*133*	*32*	313	32.11
	30 and over	*103*	*524*	*543*	*103*	1273	33.82

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.14: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 1980

Object or Domain		*Pro-Rep.*	*Anti-Rep.*	*Pro-Dem.*	*Anti-Dem.*	*Total*	*Partisan Valence*
Record and Performance	18-29	19	67	80	89	255	7.65
	30 and over	73	188	236	227	724	8.56
Experience and Management	18-29	66	38	59	45	208	-3.37
	30 and over	241	142	128	141	652	-8.59
Trust	18-29	6	21	38	12	77	26.62
	30 and over	57	47	155	65	324	12.35
Intelligence	18-29	9	40	21	12	82	24.39
	30 and over	40	133	65	45	283	19.96
Personality	18-29	22	18	25	45	110	-10.91
	30 and over	71	55	98	150	374	-9.09
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	38	68	57	39	202	11.88
	30 and over	145	247	198	130	720	11.81
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*123*	*181*	*193*	*184*	681	4.92
	30 and over	*440*	*548*	*554*	*513*	2055	3.63
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	31	51	42	66	190	-1.05
	30 and over	121	145	156	253	675	-5.41
Party Affect	18-29	22	7	21	8	58	-1.72
	30 and over	68	56	114	22	260	15.38
People in the Party	18-29	6	18	10	15	49	7.14
	30 and over	43	47	61	56	207	2.17
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*54*	*71*	*61*	*85*	271	-1.29
	30 and over	*219*	*226*	*283*	*301*	1029	-0.53
Foreign Policy	18-29	70	120	80	168	438	-4.34
	30 and over	159	157	156	365	837	-12.60
Economic Policy	18-29	86	33	17	121	257	-30.54
	30 and over	191	93	111	263	658	-19.00
Social Welfare	18-29	24	22	28	29	103	-1.46
	30 and over	72	71	96	126	365	-4.25
Moral Issues	18-29	11	20	5	7	43	8.14
	30 and over	25	29	3	17	74	-6.76
Energy and the Environment	18-29	6	14	8	10	38	7.89
	30 and over	7	11	12	32	62	-12.90
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	16	36	25	27	104	8.65
	30 and over	32	63	50	78	223	0.67
General Issue Comments	18-29	42	24	27	29	122	-8.20
	30 and over	131	74	63	87	355	-11.41
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*167*	*179*	*137*	*251*	734	-6.95
	30 and over	*395*	*350*	*353*	*579*	1677	-8.08
Group Associations	*18-29*	*22*	*71*	*71*	*22*	186	26.34
	30 and over	*58*	*286*	*367*	*79*	790	32.66

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.15: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 1976

Object or Domain		***Pro-Rep.***	***Anti-Rep.***	***Pro-Dem.***	***Anti-Dem.***	***Total***	***Partisan Valence***
Record and Performance	18-29	49	103	75	57	284	12.68
	30 and over	199	260	187	158	804	5.60
Experience and Management	18-29	177	123	51	75	426	-9.15
	30 and over	506	283	149	281	1219	-14.56
Trust	18-29	72	50	90	91	303	-3.80
	30 and over	337	144	254	269	1004	-10.36
Intelligence	18-29	30	28	71	30	159	12.26
	30 and over	108	74	130	119	431	-2.67
Personality	18-29	30	39	54	122	245	-12.04
	30 and over	123	110	220	325	778	-7.58
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	70	69	121	63	323	8.82
	30 and over	248	165	334	208	955	2.25
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*279*	*285*	*276*	*294*	1134	-0.53
	30 and over	*873*	*694*	*776*	*829*	3172	-3.66
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	53	85	59	95	292	-0.68
	30 and over	235	336	143	415	1129	-7.57
Party Affect	18-29	10	28	26	6	70	27.14
	30 and over	87	117	145	39	388	17.53
People in the Party	18-29	19	63	28	28	138	15.94
	30 and over	81	193	90	91	455	12.20
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*77*	*150*	*101*	*121*	449	5.90
	30 and over	*351*	*524*	*344*	*495*	1714	0.64
Foreign Policy	18-29	67	73	24	48	212	-4.25
	30 and over	180	155	60	184	579	-12.87
Economic Policy	18-29	69	72	122	56	319	10.82
	30 and over	196	217	343	128	884	13.35
Social Welfare	18-29	24	34	59	35	152	11.18
	30 and over	86	106	124	151	467	-0.75
Moral Issues	18-29	6	8	11	17	42	-4.76
	30 and over	6	18	10	46	80	-15.00
Energy and the Environment	18-29	2	8	3	1	14	28.57
	30 and over	7	22	13	7	49	21.43
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	14	18	23	15	70	8.57
	30 and over	52	54	61	50	217	3.00
General Issue Comments	18-29	38	59	91	45	233	14.38
	30 and over	220	104	163	157	644	-8.54
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*148*	*181*	*227*	*150*	706	7.79
	30 and over	*524*	*493*	*548*	*510*	2075	0.17
Group Associations	*18-29*	*19*	*120*	*186*	*31*	356	35.96
	30 and over	*87*	*424*	*553*	*115*	1179	32.87

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

Table 5.16: Object and Domain Frequencies and Valences, 1972

Object or Domain		***Pro-Rep.***	***Anti-Rep.***	***Pro-Dem.***	***Anti-Dem.***	***Total***	***Partisan Valence***
Record and Performance	18-29	39	18	11	28	96	-19.79
	30 and over	115	35	32	117	299	-27.59
Experience and Management	18-29	87	22	7	40	156	-31.41
	30 and over	266	76	21	120	483	-29.92
Trust	18-29	18	49	29	24	120	15.00
	30 and over	71	143	72	97	383	6.14
Intelligence	18-29	19	5	10	34	68	-27.94
	30 and over	43	11	18	122	194	-35.05
Personality	18-29	7	5	13	59	84	-28.57
	30 and over	63	24	23	177	287	-33.62
Gen Candidate Comments	18-29	37	18	26	23	104	-7.69
	30 and over	160	61	63	129	413	-19.98
Total Cand Comments	*18-29*	*148*	*93*	*73*	*164*	478	-15.27
	30 and over	*501*	*268*	*174*	*519*	1462	-19.77
Party Admin and Conduct	18-29	36	50	30	60	176	-4.55
	30 and over	136	154	81	230	601	-10.90
Party Affect	18-29	3	13	13	7	36	22.22
	30 and over	56	43	107	32	238	13.03
People in the Party	18-29	22	19	14	35	90	-13.33
	30 and over	76	34	34	101	245	-22.24
Total Party Comments	*18-29*	*56*	*76*	*51*	*91*	274	-3.65
	30 and over	*228*	*208*	*197*	*322*	955	-7.59
Foreign Policy	18-29	146	74	69	74	363	-10.61
	30 and over	325	178	106	209	818	-15.28
Economic Policy	18-29	45	53	37	18	153	8.82
	30 and over	104	148	115	74	441	9.64
Social Welfare	18-29	20	24	29	59	132	-9.85
	30 and over	84	77	78	140	379	-9.10
Moral Issues	18-29	1	0	0	1	2	-50.00
	30 and over	2	0	0	5	7	-50.00
Energy and the Environment	18-29	1	2	1	0	4	25.00
	30 and over	1	1	2	0	4	25.00
Other Dom. Issues	18-29	9	13	13	10	45	7.78
	30 and over	52	44	39	31	166	0.00
General Issue Comments	18-29	29	13	39	43	124	-8.06
	30 and over	107	37	66	150	360	-21.39
Total Issue Comments	*18-29*	*180*	*127*	*135*	*131*	573	-4.28
	30 and over	*451*	*348*	*276*	*399*	1474	-7.67
Group Associations	*18-29*	*17*	*86*	*110*	*13*	226	36.73
	30 and over	*63*	*263*	*295*	*97*	718	27.72

Note: Positive valence scores favor the Democrats; negative favor the Republicans

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